LOCAL SEO LEVERAGE

Achieve First Page Rankings By Leveraging Your Local Search Engine Optimization Efforts In The Best Ways Possible

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) isn't all about keywords.

It isn't only about long-tail headers and meta-tags. In fact, a lot of search engine spiders ignore meta-data anyway.

As search engines continue to evolve, they are looking more and more at format and layout.

This course will discuss a few things that you need to be aware of.

During the process of going through this course, be sure to check your website to make sure that you aren't overdoing or underdoing any of these steps, and your search engine ranking should increase.

While this certainly shouldn't be taken as an end all and be all resource or course on the concept of local SEO, it would help if you go in with an open mind and a fresh slate.

Because SEO is always changing, it's important to remember that advertising and search engine optimization work the same as the real world.

The following is just a baseline that will help you brief yourself and get fully up-to-date on the topic of local SEO and such.
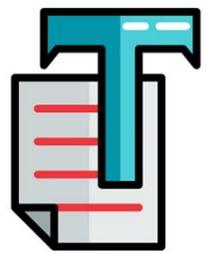
Take a good look at your page. Now go find a four-year-old and have them take a look. When you log into your website, you might already know where everything is, but if you have left it in the hands of your IT guy, that might work to your advantage in this case.

- Is your site easy to navigate?
- Is it visually appealing without appearing cheap or overly gimmicky?

Believe it or not, web crawlers are starting to look at page layout and ease of navigation among other things. They will see if your internal links are easy to read, and they will compare the information from following those links to make certain that accuracy and consistency is maintained.

Search engines care about the user experience, after all, and they want to get their regular customers to the right information quickly.

The days of java buttons and cute pictures are gone.

If you have buttons that appear on the site as images, make sure that they are tagged in the HTML with exactly what is written on the button. You may have noticed this on other sites. You mouse over a button that says, "Home," and a caption near your pointer reads "Home."

Web spiders aren't looking at your page visually, they are analyzing it through code, so if a button isn't tagged, they never load the picture to decode the information presented. They simply see it as a picture and a link. That's bad.
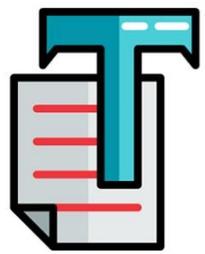
Generally speaking, text is best. With CSS and font embedding available, there is rarely a need for an image link (and if you have one, then it needs a caption encoded with it).

The next thing you want to look at is easy navigation. Look again at your landing page. Pretend that you are your average customer.

Why did you come to this site?

If you run a flower business, then your customer probably showed up to buy flowers, not to read about the history of how it's been handed down from your grandpa. If the order form or catalog isn't the very first thing they see, then a link to it should be the first underlined text they come across.

Everything else should be in the menu, or in the sidebar, or at the bottom of the page. But the middle of your screen is the prime real estate. You viewers are typically there for one thing, put it right in front of them.

Your NAP information (Name, Address, and Phone number) should be **readily available** as well.

Typically, this information is either found on a side-bar, or down at the bottom. This way it's displayed on every page of the site, and the user (and consequently, the web spider) doesn't have to go hunting for it by clicking every option on your menu or anything.

It should be on every, single, page; and it should appear identically.

If you do have an "about us" page where it is listed as part of the content, that's fine. Two to three total impressions are the max, not because you should spam your address all over the place, but because you might have a map page, or a how to find us, or something similar.

You want this information to be tight and easy to read. **No fancy fonts**, make it large enough to see.

The one thing that is incredibly important is that the information appears the same, everywhere it is listed. Check every instance of this online business card to make sure they match, and search engines will treat you favorably.

If you have a transposed number in your zip-code, or a different formatting for your telephone number, it will be frowned upon. Remember, spiders aren't people, they're programs, and as much as they are attempting to emulate a user experience, they aren't actually loading content, or seeing the page as your human customers do.

To plan for the future, **all text on your site should be spoken in the language of human speech.**

The sound and feel of every little blurb should sound as you would if you were speaking directly to your customers.

This is where overuse of keywords will become obvious, and a natural language approach will be better for voice searches and navigation, which are becoming more popular all the time.
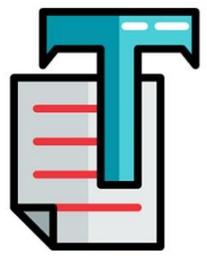
The easiest way to keep NAP information straight is to create a business card widget. This will ensure that the information is copied accurately and consistently across your website.

And even though it isn't part of local SEO, you will want to check all of your advertising and use the widget there as well. Consistency is key.

Another advantage of the business card widget is that you can add a professional logo to it, to help brand building. You can even design it to look just like your business card.

Just be sure that the text information is actual text. Your email address can be linkable. Make it easy for the spiders to find everything.

Don't abuse keywords. More and more, search engines are scanning for keyword spamming. A better approach is to make sure that the focus of the article or text necessitates the need for keyword placement.

Long tail keywords in the page title are important. This isn't just the first thing a customer sees, but how spiders decide the focus evaluation of the rest of the article.

Use keywords to be specific about the product, service, or topic of discussion, and make sure that they reflect what is in the title of the post.

Don't just shoot for the most search engine hits. Aim for the keywords that make you stand out from the competition.
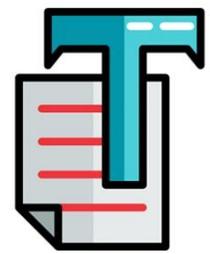
In the flower business example, if most of your customers want flowers for proms and dating, then you can use specific flowers or arrangements they might be searching for. "Corsages and Boutonnieres for Prom Night, and add a Roses or Bouquet" versus "A Flower for your Girl."

- Which one do you think is going to get more hits on Google?
- Which one is going to tell your customer that you have a selection?
- Which one is going to hint at the fact that you know how to get a guy just the right arrangement for the big night?

The title also makes it easy to focus the article around arrangements, which will give you natural language approaches to re-use each keyword several times without appearing like you're trying to spam.

This will be rewarded by both your customers, and the search spiders.

Put Emphasis On Always Being Current

When it comes to local search engine optimization, it should also come as no surprise that being current with trends, news, events, and methods is the absolute essential to ensuring longevity in rankings.

In this section we will be briefly detailing some of the best ways to place emphasis on that of always being current.

Use Google AdWords.

Think about it, if your target is to get your page ranking higher on a search engine, why not make the search engine people happy buy enlisting in their own marketing program.

Google also offers advice to page managers in order to boost their overall results. Give them what they want. Each click from AdWords is another redirect to your site, it's another backlink, and it's being offered from the company that most people go to when they are looking for something.

Be dynamic, and be current.

If you are having trouble finding things to blog about, why not use your blog as a way of keeping your visitors informed about your industry, or even the entire sector?

Stay on top of breaking news, offer helpful tips that add value for your customers, put out newsletters and press releases about how your business is keeping up with the latest trends. Foster interaction, and be willing to address specific issues raised by your customers.

If a customer sends a question via email, don't simply reply and be done with it. Write an article that addresses the concern, or link them to an article you already have on the topic.

I like the "Here's the short answer, but you can find out more on this blog post: LINK" approach.

This boosts traffic, delivers a quick and decisive answer to their question, and gives them a page on your site to look at if they want to carry the research deeper in that event.

It's not unlike grade school, if one student asks, that means half the class is wondering about the same question, and simply afraid to raise their hand.

A website is no longer simply an informational advertisement, it is the hub of your entire online marketing campaign.

Social accounts provide outside links from your website, so that customers can find you on other dashboards. Advertisements or engagements in your social communities provide backlinks.

Having the all of our online accounts in harmony with one another makes it easier for anyone to find you, spread the word, and convert to regular customers, and it can also boost your search engine rankings.

Try keeping all of your accounts uniform.

If possible, they should all have the same user name. You should have personal profiles linked to the pages as well. Such as employees and regular customers.

Make the most of your social media connections.

Instead of randomly sending out alerts and emails, engage your audiences in discussion. Find out what they would like to see from your company.

- Solve their problems with your products.
- Develop apps.
- Form Facebook groups, or even your own forums.

Don't just engage in the community, be the community.

Doing so will ensure that all offline activities link back to your site, drive traffic, and create a fan base.

As a general rule, these sites should encourage social activity among your fans, and not be just another banner for advertising.

Even if you are focused on local SEO, the media can play a vital role in that development also. If your press release or hosted blog posts are getting attention, you can provide your own blog article on-site that links back to the content.

Two-way traffic is something that search spiders crave. It increases both your ranking and your ability to drive an audience, creating a feedback loop rather than a one-way portal. In the end, you want reach, and you can boost it while increasing your search ranking.

The next time you do a guest blog, or get a news story published about your site, be sure to link to it from your own site blog, and write a brief article about its contents, or expand on the article's content with more information that couldn't be squeezed into the blog article.

React to the article. Then go leave a comment on the media source, linking back to your own page with something like, "Find out more, here."

Review the comment sections of articles about your company to give you more insight and ideas for blog posts.

Blog about the question, then go back to the comments and drop a link.

Show your customers that you want to be engaged, and send those little spiders back and forth to your page as much as possible. You might also be able to use your business card widget off site.

Local SEO Concluding Thoughts

The best way to boost your search engine rankings start on your website. But instead of simply focusing on keywords, you can boost your local SEO by engaging on other sites and linking to the content.

Make headers that matter, engage your audience, and keep everything consistent and natural. Don't stuff the web page content with keywords or intentionally write as if you're talking to some sort of robotic mechanism?

Above all, make it a point to constantly be evolving and staying in the know when it comes to current and arising SEO trends.

In truth, there's not a lot to learn if you're always following the rules and not trying to game the system. However, it's important to still make note of algorithm updates that engines such as Google roll out.

If you focus on writing natural content and trying to help the reader with their questions or the reason that they're even on the page, you will find that the results are much more worthwhile.

In turn, without a doubt, you will see your search engine ranks climb, and the traffic will keep flowing.

In closing, I would like to take a moment to thank you for investing some time into this course. I hope you've learned a few things, and I wish you all the best of luck with your future marketing efforts.