

28 Things You're Doing Wrong with Your SEO

(And How to Fix Them to Make Your Sales Soar)



Your SEO success story starts here.

SEO: it's saturated with confusing abbreviations, tough rules, and ever-shifting trends. And it's absolutely swimming with competition.

If you've been thrown off the SEO bull before, you'll know that there are hundreds of components all contributing to successful SEO strategies – and not every SEO provider is equipped to handle them. If you feel like your SEO provider isn't hitting that level of performance you're striving for, then **now** is the time to review where you can improve your business' strategy.

When it comes to SEO, knowledge is power. That's why we've created this guide that will help you navigate the keyword jungles, chart the cyberspace of meta tags and URLs, and transform your business' website into a lead-generating powerhouse.

Over three key areas of this eBook (Content, Website and SEO Strategy), you'll learn:

- **How to optimise your website**, attract more traffic, and rake in more leads;
- **The SEO terminology and trends** that are shaping the industry right now; and
- **Valuable and actionable SEO tricks** that you can start using **today** to drive your sales higher.

These SEO hacks and trade secrets we're revealing are written especially for:

- **Business owners** who aren't seeing results from their current SEO provider;
- **Marketing managers** who want a better understanding of the innerworkings of SEO; and
- **SEO consultants** in search of a comprehensive SEO checklist.

If that sounds like you, then let's jump right into it.

Your content strategy doesn't align with your **SEO goals**

01

Is your website packed with great content but resulting in few conversions or first-page results?

This could be attributed to the type of content you are producing. Your content may be well-received by a particular audience, but at the end of the day, if this audience does not align with the demographic of your converting customers, you need to rethink your strategy. **An article that causes users to 'bounce' (i.e. exiting without exploring your site past the specific blog article) sends negative signals to search engines.**

Let's say your business specialises in commercial construction, but your blogs cover topics like interior design, residential construction ideas, and gardening tips. While your blogs may be well-written and informative for residential purposes, at the end of the day, these readers will not convert on your website.

Instead, they will bounce in search of another business who'll be able to make those ideas happen. A high bounce rate tells search engines that your content isn't relevant for the right audience, therefore pushing your SEO score down.

To minimise that bounce rate, you need to devise a strategy that will keep your converting customers engaged and interested. All your content needs to target that specific demographic for the best results. For that particular example, instead of interior design articles, you need to realign your focus onto commercial construction blogs. This may include information on how to choose a commercial builder, what to consider when planning a commercial project, and how to structure a tender.

You **get ideas** (and word-for-word content) from your competitors

02

So: you found a great article on your competitor's site that perfectly sums up a topic your potential customers will find riveting.

It can be very tempting to simply copy and paste the article, especially if you don't have the time to write your own website content. Unfortunately, this is one of the biggest mistakes business owners make, because other than copyright issues, duplicating content is a sure-fire way to damage your page's ranking potential.

Why is that? Well, search engines only intend on displaying the most relevant (and original) information to the user's search query. When search engines see two pages that have the same – or extremely similar – chunks of text, the search engine will give more authority to the poster who published the content first. **Any other content that is a copy of this will not exactly be penalised by Google, but it will not achieve a great ranking.**

This is because search engines aim to present a diverse range of content on the first page results, so by copying content, you limit your chances to appear at the top.

Therefore, if you do like someone else's ideas, you need to produce content that is organically conveyed in your own words – not copy-pasted.



Most of your blogs haven't been looked at in **3+ years**

03

Is your site full of blogs that were only relevant before the Game of Thrones finale, Fortnite, or perhaps even before the Kardashian empire reigned?

The problem with this is that so many things change in a few years – especially within your industry, including new laws, regulations, trends and popular beliefs. Over a few years, these changes can accumulate to render your blogs totally irrelevant and inaccurate to users.

And if it's irrelevant for users, it's irrelevant for search engines. If your blogs contain information that is no longer true or accurate, your users will bounce. A high bounce rate indicates to search engines that your blogs are no longer relevant to the user's search query, therefore pushing your ranking down.

The best way to combat outdated information is to spend some time combing through your content. Delete anything that:

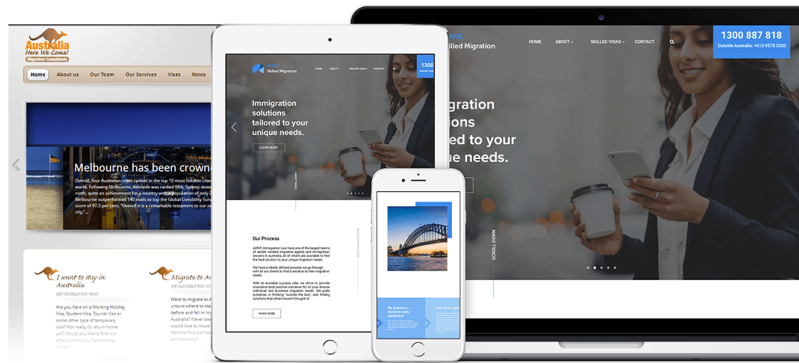
- **Doesn't benefit users** in some way by answering their questions or teaching them new information;
- **Does nothing for your branding** and doesn't establish you as a thought leader;
- **Is riddled with grammatical errors** and seems to be low-quality or duplicate content; and
- **Doesn't speak to the audience** that's currently converting.

Out of everything that's left, the next step is to improve the old blogs by adding shiny, new content that is contemporary and up-to-date with industry news.

Your web content is a heavy-looking **block of words**

04

What looks more attractive and easier to read to you?



We thought so! Users always visit a website with the intent of finding something, whether they're browsing through some wholesale construction materials for their next project, or they want to find out how to prepare for their upcoming job interview.

And with these specific intentions, unfortunately, comes very little patience. **Think about the way you use websites: do you study every single word and image on the page? Probably not!** Most users scan through the page to find exactly what they're looking for, and the easier they can find that information, the higher your conversion rate will be. Always remember that the better the user experience is, the more people will stay on your page for longer, and the more your SEO will improve.

Make your content user-friendly and easier to read with these simple hacks:

- **Include relevant and clear subheadings** that summarise what the paragraph below explains in detail
- **Break up your content** into short paragraphs that are easy to skim through
- **Utilise images and visual cues** to help illustrate the point your paragraph is making.



Quick Definition. Black Hat SEO

Black hat SEO is a collection of unethical techniques used by some webmasters to manipulate search engines for higher rankings. Once detected by search engines, websites using black hat SEO tactics can be severely penalised or even entirely removed. Therefore, it's best practice to avoid black hat SEO altogether.

There's a category for (literally) every kind of **topic on your blog**

05

You need to walk a fine line with blog categories and tags.

On one hand, having a few relevant categories can make it easier for users to navigate the website, encouraging them to stay on it for longer. On the other, **too many blog categories or tags can jeopardise your SEO without you even knowing it.**

This is because every new category or tag is equivalent to a new page, under which the relevant blog articles fall. If you've created categories just for the sake of creating them, you're at risk of spreading your content very thinly across a vast number of pages. This is a red flag for search engines, as a lack of content indicates poor quality in comparison to longer pages.

Luckily, this SEO mistake is easy to fix. Review all your blog categories and see which ones overlap in content, then combine those categories so the articles from both groups come together under one. If you find that you've got certain categories that only contain one article, consider whether that article can be placed in another category instead.

Keywords are treated like 100s and 1000s

06

By now, everyone is aware that web content needs to contain certain related keywords that will help attract organic traffic.

But when these keywords are overloaded on a page – perhaps to the point where they resemble 100s and 1000s – you could attract yourself a hefty search penalisation that is difficult to rectify.

This black hat SEO technique is known as keyword stuffing (or keyword cramming). It involves stuffing keywords in every nook and cranny of your website in an attempt to gain an unethical (and unfair) ranking advantage: from the content, to the meta tags, to the backlink anchor text. Perhaps you've even noticed it before on other business' pages, where you're reading about

bathroom design trends and “plumber Melbourne” is shoved unnaturally in the middle of a sentence!

This tactic will not get you far. Search engines have since become extremely sensitive to keyword cramming, and they can detect it very easily. Once it has been detected, your ranking will decline, and your page could even be removed.

Remember these tips to avoid keywords stuffing:

- **Quality is king** – only use keywords that are relevant to the accompanying content
- **Increase the word count** of your blog or content, so you give yourself more natural opportunities to use relevant keywords
- **Write informative content** so that your keywords flow naturally rather than artificially.

You didn't know Google sees blogs **differently now**

07

Once upon a time, it was common practice to aim to have as much relevant content on your site as possible for as many different topics as you could think of.

As long as the blogs were between 300-500 words, they could rank highly without much difficulty. In the nature of ever-evolving search engine rules, this has changed. While blogging is still a webmaster's secret weapon when it comes to SEO, shorter posts no longer rank as highly as longer posts of 2000+ words.

This comes down to a few different reasons:

- **Longer posts stand out more** on search engines
- **Users generally prefer longer posts** because it means they don't have to visit other pages to get all the information they need

- **Longer posts keep your users on the site for longer** and are shared more on social media
- Quality long-form posts present the opportunity for your page to rank for **long-tail keywords and more detailed search queries.**

To create high-quality long-form posts that outrank all your competitor's blogs, you need to:

- **Conduct lots of research** into a specific topic that your customers are bound to love;
- **Gather plenty of relevant data** and produce a well-written blog that fleshes out each key point; and
- **Make sure to structure your blog** with clear subheadings, paragraphs, titles, plenty of dot points, and clear images.

Two or more of your pages are 'eating' each other

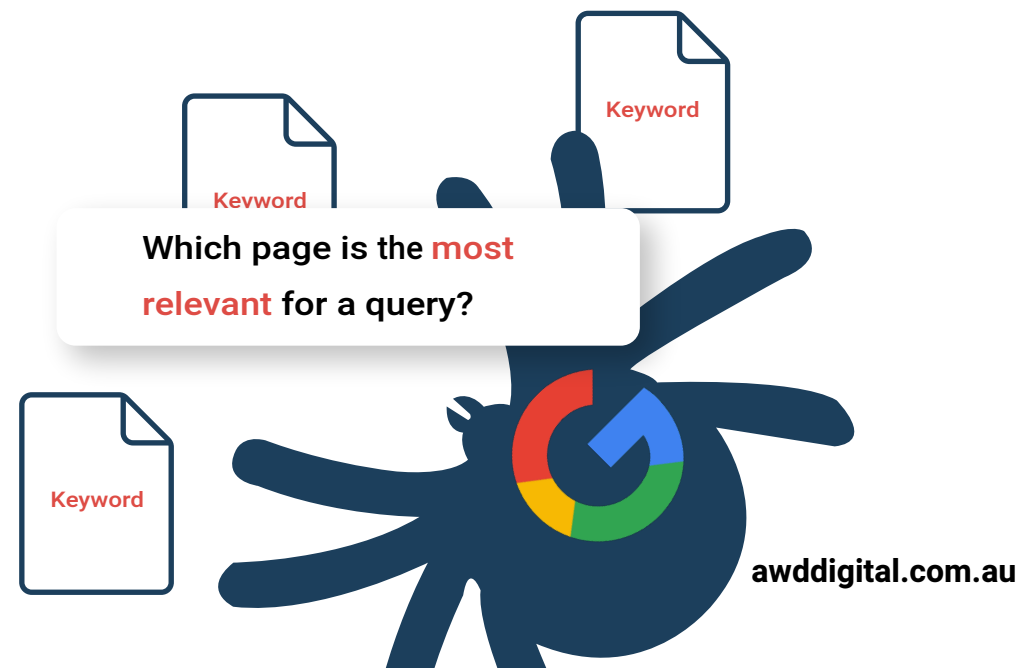
08

Page cannibalisation: it's exactly what it sounds like.

It occurs when an entire website is crafted around a single word or key phrase that is present on multiple parts of the site. Remember how we discussed duplicate content? This is the same thing, except instead of two different domains competing with each other on search engines, page cannibalisation occurs between two or more pages of the same website.

Page cannibalisation can also occur if your website content is based around the same topics and themes. **Because search engine spiders cannot differentiate between highly similar themes**, they'll become confused as to which content is most relevant. This means you lose out on proper opportunities to rank on search engines.

Instead, beat page cannibalisation by choosing a range of different keywords to target through various pages on your website. If you have a few articles that are very similar, simply merge them and employ a 301 redirect (see #27 in this eBook) for the article you plan to delete. Ensuring all the content is unique will help drive your page rankings higher across a broader and more diverse network of queries!



External links are either non-existent or of poor quality

09

An external link is a link within content that transports the user away from your website, to another website.

For example, a food blog article may contain a link to a restaurant's online menu. In this case, the user would be taken from the article directly to the menu.

Although it may sound like external links are directing business away from your website, they are actually extremely important for creating meaningful content. **Think of external links for websites like reference lists for essays – they're a sign that the content is well-researched and credible.** This is how users and search engines view external links, too.

Therefore, it's important to include external links that are relevant to the topic you're discussing. The more credible the external domain is (such as .gov or .edu, as opposed to just .com), the more value this brings to your website.

PRO TIP: Make sure you set up external links to open in a new tab, so that users aren't completely removed from your website.

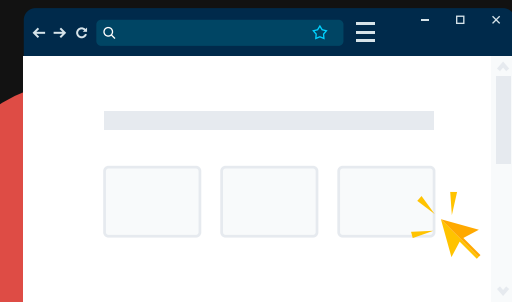
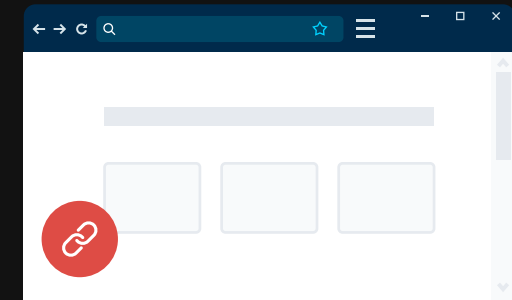
You jump on any chance to **cram in internal links**

Alternatively, an internal link is a link on your website that leads users to another page on your website.

For example, if you run a local accounting firm, you may decide to write an article for your business' website about tax returns and everything to consider before filing for a return. Within this article, you may link to another page on your site that details what your business offers in terms of tax return services. This is an internal link.

Internal links are extremely valuable for drawing attention to your business' services, keeping users on your site for longer, and increasing the opportunities for a conversion. However, if your internal links don't match the surrounding content, users and search engines may see this as fraudulent (similar to keyword cramming). Avoiding this is easy – just link where it's relevant. No more, no less.

10



Google thinks you're hiding text

11

Now that you know the importance of content for SEO, you may already be devising new ways to improve your website's ranking. If it's as simple as ensuring keywords appear on the page, the possibilities are virtually endless, right? You could be sitting back in your chair and smiling already, wondering why other webmasters have not thought of simply making the keywords invisible to the user, but technically there on a page. As a matter of fact, why not hide links or entire pages, too?

Hold that thought. While it might seem clever, this black hat SEO technique can earn a nasty penalisation from search engines, **often taking years to recover to your original ranking.**

Any of the following sly strategies are considered a violation of Google's Webmaster Guidelines:

- Matching the colour of text to your background, thereby making it invisible
- Using CSS to position text off-screen
- Setting the font size to 0
- Hiding text behind an image
- Hiding a link by only using one character (such as a hyphen) as the anchor text.

To avoid being flagged by search engines, everything you put on your website needs to be readable and accessible for users. This means having all text visible, all pages displayed in an easy-to-navigate bar or menu, and all links connected to relevant anchor text.

Quick Definition: Google Penalty

A Google penalty is incurred when the algorithm or a manual audit has revealed that your website is utilising black hat SEO techniques or has failed to respond to recent algorithm changes. If your website has received a penalty, this will mean **your ranking for targeted keywords will drop considerably or be wiped altogether**. As a result, your website will essentially become invisible to your target audience, restricting your traffic and lead opportunities.

Your website doesn't have clear CTAs

12

Meet your new best friend: the CTA.

A call to action (or CTA) is what prompts the user to take some kind of action that could result in a lead. It provides a clear next step for users to communicate with you or enquire further about your business. This aspect of user experience helps to reduce your bounce rate, therefore improving your SEO score.

CTAs are essential for blogs, EDMs, websites, social media, Google Ads, and any other form of communication you have with your audience. If there's any part of your site that should be pampered and preened, it's the CTA. It needs to look bold, attractive and inviting; users won't click if it's tiny or hard to find.

Here are some handy ways you can optimise your website's CTAs:

- **Make your CTAs clickable or interactive.** This will allow your CTA to stand out from the rest of your content and entices an action.
- **Use testimonials to show off results.** When you offer real success stories, you minimise your audience's perceived risk to click through and engage with your company.
- **Include statistics and compelling numbers.** Statistics often lure a higher CTR (click-through rate) and great conversions, as users want to see proof and results. Make sure your numbers are realistic and accurate.
- **Stand out.** Your CTA needs to stand out so that your users don't miss it. The bigger, the brighter, the better.

You have no idea what an XML sitemap is

13

Your XML sitemap is the directory and guide to your website, showing what is contained on your website.

The best kinds of websites are sorted in a logical hierarchical order with the most relevant pages at the top. If you have an eCommerce site and one of your products is a pair of jeans, for example, it makes sense to have this under a 'Pants' category in the sidebar or main menu.

So: what exactly does this have to do with SEO?

Firstly, you need to understand how an XML sitemap works. The XML sitemap lists all the pages of your site to assist Google (and other search engines) with faster indexation, especially for

new pages. For older pages, an XML sitemap helps Google spiders rank the importance of content as per the user's search query. XML sitemaps generally display all URLs and post dates of pages. XML sitemaps are not user-facing, and they are typically uploaded to the Google Search Console.

An XML sitemap is imperative if:

- **You have a new website**, as it helps index pages faster;
- **You have a very large website** with many pages; and
- **You make frequent changes** to your website's content.

Your **loading speed** makes you want to quit the tab

14

Page speed is the time it takes for pages to fully load and display all their content.

You can check the speed of your page by using Google's PageSpeed Insights. Google's PageSpeed Insights evaluates your page's speed and provides a score from 0-100 based on two metrics, FCP (First Contentful Paint) and DCL (DOM Content Loaded).

Recently, Google has indicated that this page speed score is one of their key signals for ranking pages, due to the search engine's number one goal of improving user experience. **The longer it takes for a page to load, the higher the risk of the user bouncing, because, let's face it: no one likes a slow page.** Therefore, the slower your page is, the more users will bounce, and the more your SEO score will suffer. A PageSpeed score of 90+ indicates your site is well-performing.

Here are some simple ways you can improve your page speed:

- **Optimise your website's images.** Make sure that your images are not any bigger than they need to be, or they'll take a long time to load.
- **Compress the right files.** You can use a file compression script to reduce the size of your HTML, CSS and JavaScript files that are any larger than 150 bytes.
- **Minimise your redirects.** When your page has to redirect to another page, it increases the time your user has to wait for the HTTP request to complete.
- **Get browser caching on your side.** As browsers cache a lot of information (such as JavaScript files, images, etc.) you can set the expiration of your information to be cached to reasonable time frames – a year, for example. This can be done with tools such as 'YSlow'.

As page load time goes from...

1s to 3s the probability of bounce increases by 32%



1s to 5s the probability of bounce increases by 90%



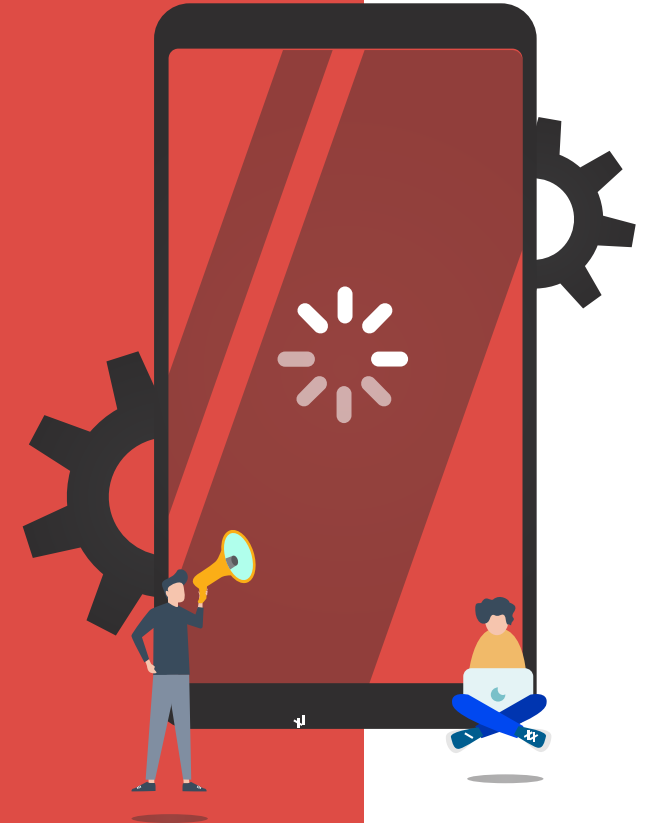
1s to 6s the probability of bounce increases by 106%



1s to 10s the probability of bounce increases by 123%



Source: Google/SOASTA Research, 2017.



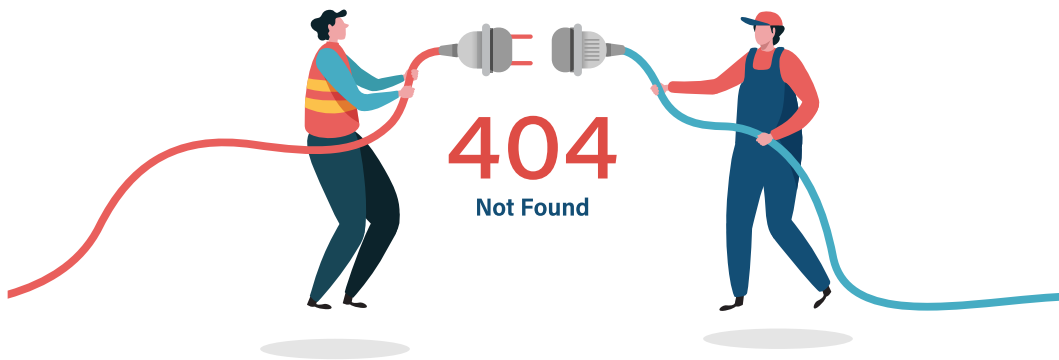
CASE STUDY: Amazon.com found that just 100 milliseconds of lagging page speed cost them a whopping 1% in sales.



Some page links are like dead-ends in mazes

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Have you ever finally found the page or link you need, and then been met with this message?



This is known as a broken link. Not only are broken links beyond annoying for you to come across, but they'll likely cause you to leave the site and go to a competitor's website in search of that information.

As Google is consistently looking to improve user experience, broken links won't just lose you visitors – they'll also damage your SEO efforts. When Google notices that your viewers are leaving your website within seconds, the search engine will make the assumption that your users did not find what they are looking for, and therefore generate a lower ranking on SERPs (search engine results pages).

So how do you know if your website has broken links? It's simple: check your website. Conduct a site audit through Google's Search Console to discover which pages and links are triggering the dreaded 404 error (or any other crawl errors). If you do happen to find broken links, you can choose to either redirect them to another page on your website, replace them with other links, or remove them altogether.

Your website doesn't perform well on **mobile devices**

16

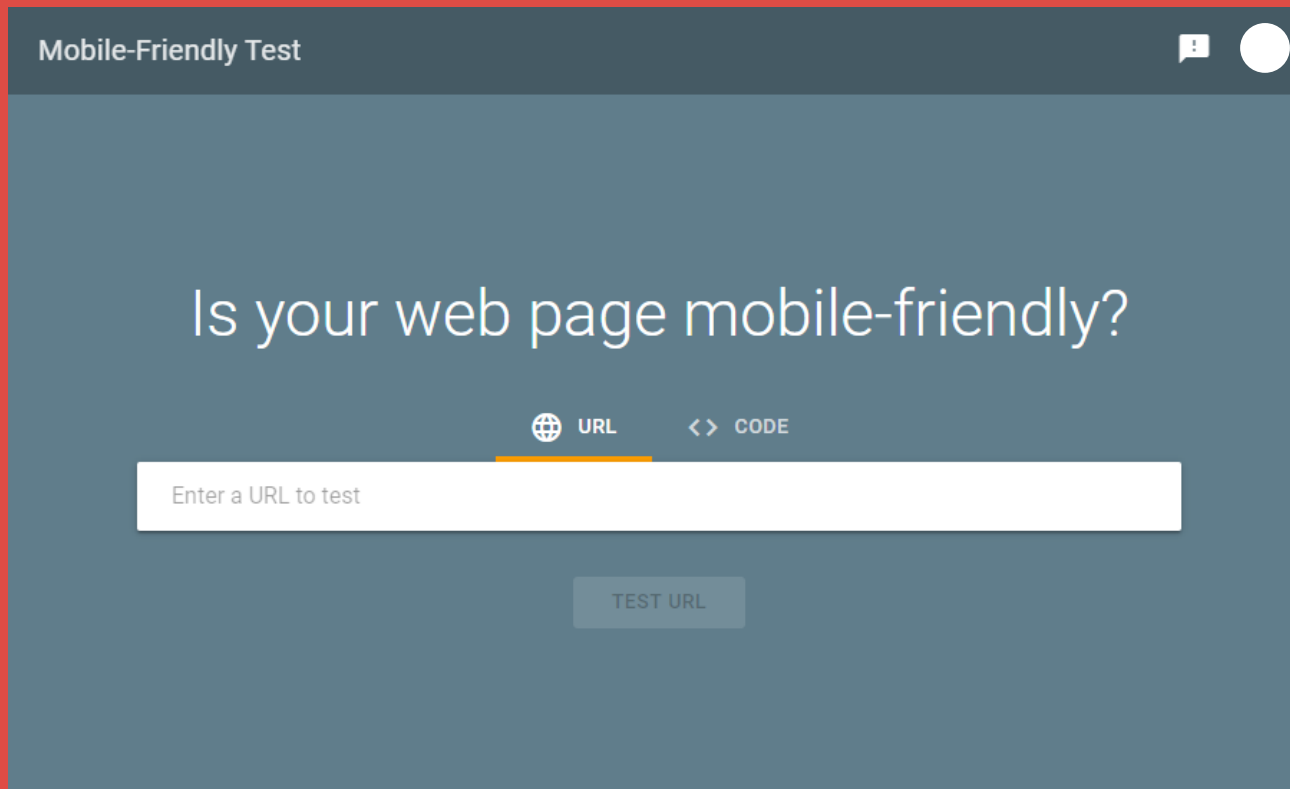
In the last few years, Google has been urging webmasters to start prioritising mobile-friendly web designs, thanks to the number of mobile searches finally surpassing desktop searches in 2018. In fact, in early 2018, Google introduced mobile-first indexing, which began indexing websites based on their mobile version, rather than their desktop version.

A site that isn't mobile-friendly can therefore be penalised, thanks to this new mobile-first indexing system.

If your website is totally inoperable on mobile devices, your SEO alarm bells should be ringing by now. And since 3 in 4 mobile users turn to mobile searches to address their searches immediately, you could also be cutting out a significant portion of users by neglecting to create a mobile-friendly site.

You can ensure your website is mobile-friendly with these five steps:

- **Compress your images and CSS** to ensure your page speed remains optimised
- **Stay away from software** that does not work on phones (such as Flash players)
- **Create responsive websites that auto-adjust to mobile** screen sizes, so users don't need to rotate their screen view or spend time zooming in (this is known as the Viewport Meta Tag, and needs to be added on every page of your website)
- **Double-check all your forms** to confirm they're optimised (test all buttons on mobile and disable autocorrect so that your users can easily enter addresses and names)
- **Check that your buttons and links are large enough** to click on, and are spaced correctly in mobile view.



PRO TIP: Check if your website is mobile-friendly by putting it through Google's Mobile-Friendly Test!

The **CMS** is a nightmare to use

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As a webmaster and business owner, the last thing you want to do is choose a content platform that is not equipped with SEO tools. **Your CMS (content management system) should grant you the ability to take easy control of your website platform; it shouldn't limit your control over SEO tags and structures.**

A good CMS is also important in how you complete day-to-day online operations, ultimately making it easier for you to manage your online performance.

What makes a good CMS? Look for these five features in your next CMS:

- **It's easy to use** and allows you to tweak the design in the way you want to
- You're offered a **vast array of content management tools**
- **It enables a mobile version** of your site
- **It allows social media integration** for anything you post on the site
- **It comes equipped with SEO tools** and plugins to help boost your SEO ranking.

Quick Definition: User Intent

User intent (also known as query intent or search intent) is the reason why users search for something online. The best way to understand user intent is to provide context for a particular search query.

Broadly speaking, there are four different categories (or contexts) of user intent:

- **Navigational** - where users search for a particular website.
- **Informational** - where users search for the answer to a question.
- **Investigational** - where users search for information that may eventually lead to transaction.
- **Transactional** - where users are ready to buy.

Your web design causes high bounce rates

18

A high bounce rate can be caused by any number of things, but it will always have the same result: a negative impact on your search engine ranking. This is because the inherent purpose of search engines is to highlight relevant content that speaks to user intent.

A high bounce rate indicates to search engines that, unfortunately, your website does not align with user intent, and therefore is less relevant to the query.

You may be wondering, “How does this happen if my content is useful and relevant?”

We hear you, and if it’s not your content that’s the issue, it could come down to a poor user experience (UX) of your website’s design. First impressions are everything, after all, and if the user

interprets your web design as one of poor quality, they’ll assume the content matches that standard – causing a bounce.

Take a minute to inspect your site and complete the following five-step web design checklist:

- **Ensure all fonts are large enough to be readable**, but not too large (16px is generally accepted as ideal body text size, and 30px is good for headings)
- **Update all your images** so they’re high quality and don’t look too much like stock images
- **Follow the conventions when it comes to navigation bars** by keeping headings simple and easy to understand
- **Make all links a different colour to body text** (or underline links) so users can respond to them
- **Strip down your web design’s colours and fonts** to a select few – minimalism wins!

You haven't done your homework on **keywords**

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Plant the seed for your SEO efforts to grow with keyword research.

Keywords inform almost every part of your website, and they act as a foundation upon which your content can flourish.

Essentially, when keywords align with user intent, they can be very successful in attracting the right kind of audience to your website.

But what exactly will happen if you choose keywords without doing your research? The truth is, not much. Relevant audiences won't be able to find your content, they won't click on your articles, and you'll lose out on opportunities to attract meaningful traffic and leads.

Try out a few of these foolproof research hacks:

- **Conduct an organic search yourself** for key topics and buzzwords related to your industry and note down what comes up under the section 'related searches' or 'people also searched for'.
- **Use Google Ads Keyword Planner** to check if your list of keywords has a good search volume. Your keywords should achieve that Goldilocks volume: not too saturated, and not too scarce.
- **Cross-check this list against your competitors' websites** – are they ranking well for those search terms? This will give you a good indication of what is working for them, and also what they might be missing.

You're underestimating how Google prioritises location

20

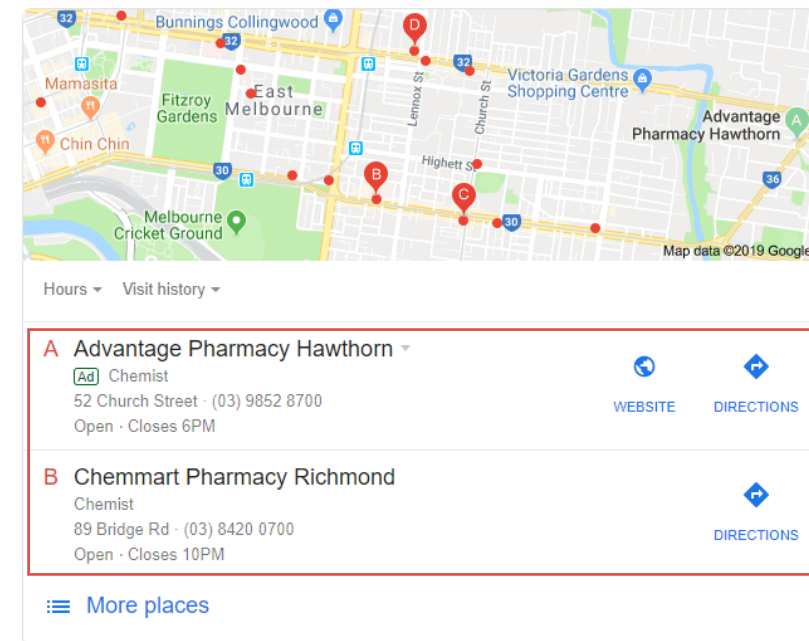
If you think about the way search engines align with user intent, it makes sense that they would prioritise websites that relate to the user's location. **After all, when we search up something, we're often looking for answers that are close by and easily accessible.**

In fact, Google's Local Pack – the top three businesses that are relevant to a search query – is one of the first things a user will see when they search something. It gives users the opportunity to click directly through to your website, and is invaluable for continued online growth.

So how do you get in Google's Local Pack?

Part of it (approximately 19%, according to Moz research) comes down to ensuring your business has been registered on Google My Business (GMB). Owning a GMB listing will allow your business to rank for location-based searches, show up on

Google Maps, and therefore increase your website's overall rank. Claiming your business on GMB will also allow you to attract more local business, giving you the opportunity to nurture leads over time.



Online reviews aren't that important to you

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Landing in Google's Local Pack can also depend on your online reviews – particularly Google reviews.

Moz research even suggests that reviews can account for 13% of your chance to make it into the Local Pack!

The reasons for this are simple: Google (and other search engines) look to reviews as opportunities to verify the information you have provided. Reviews are also a sign of credibility to other users, which can encourage them to click on your business and help to drive your ranking upwards.

Online reviews, therefore, hold significant weight when it comes to attracting (or repelling) potential customers. As a result of this user reaction, a high number of positive reviews indicates to search engines that your business is the most

relevant or the best in response to the search query.

While you can't fake positive reviews, you can try to encourage them in the following ways:

- **Ask** your loyal customers for a testimonial or a review on Google, Facebook or Yelp
- **Incentivise** reviews through competitions, giveaways, events or promotions.

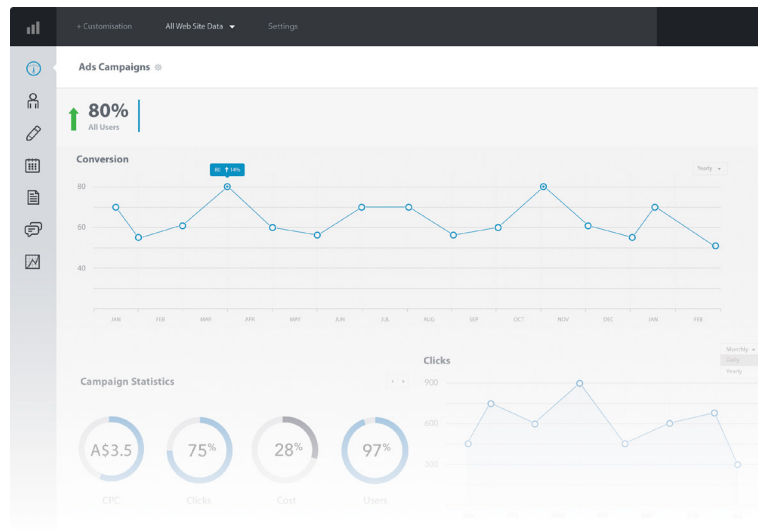
PRO TIP: Respond to all reviews in a professional manner, even if they're negative, as future users will be able to view this and make a judgement on your business.

You're not tracking your progress with **Google Analytics**

22

Google Analytics is one of the few gifts given to us SEO nerds, but unfortunately, many businesses don't have a clue what it is – let alone how valuable it can be for your online progress.

Essentially, Google Analytics grants you the superpower of insight.



At the bare minimum, Google Analytics can tell you:

- What your **bounce rate** is
- **Where your visitors are coming from**, and how they found out about your site
- **What people are searching for** on your website search bar
- **Your top-performing pages** based on number of conversions
- **The actions users take on your website**, including what they click on and how long they stay on pages.

And that's just the beginning! Neglecting to use this rich resource denies you the chance to outperform your own SEO, so it's important to start familiarising yourself with it now.

You didn't know about the latest **SEO trend**

23

Think of SEO like a Rubik's Cube that reshuffles every few days. The only way you're going to be able to solve it is by knowing how it works!

While SEO is perhaps not as difficult to crack as a Rubik's Cube, the principle remains: you need to stay in the loop to be successful.

Search engine algorithms are always changing as knowledge about user experience evolves. This has a trickle-down effect on SEO trends, so it's vital to know what's happening in the industry if you want to stay ahead of it.

For example, when mobile-friendly websites started to become favoured by Google algorithms, many websites lost their rankings because they were not prepared for this new change. **The next forecasted trend that is already starting to snowball is voice search.** As such, it pays to be prepared with the right research.

You've forgotten how people really search

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Let's say you're in Northcote, and you're starting to feel a little peckish. You're in the mood for a good, old-fashioned burger, but you aren't familiar with the best spots for food in the area. What's your next move? If you're like most other users, you would be searching something like 'best burgers in Northcote'.

This type of search query, which usually has around 3-5 words, is called a **long-tail keyword**. A **short-tail keyword**, in contrast, is around 1-2 words. In the example above, the short-tail keyword might be something like 'burgers Northcote'.

The problem with short-tail keywords is they don't represent how users truly search. User search intent is usually reflective of how we, as users, think and ask questions. Therefore, it makes sense that long-tail keywords are likelier to convert, because we tend to think (and ask questions) in fully-formed sentences, rather than

broken sentences. And at the end of the day, while 'burgers Northcote' will bring up all the relevant burger joints, 'best burgers in Northcote' is likely to deliver a more specific answer relating to the quality of products, which the user will ultimately be more satisfied with.

As a result, long-tail keywords tend to have a better conversion rate, proving that you need to keep them in mind when you create content. As for which long-tail keywords to choose, it all depends on how relevant your website is, in response to what your customers are frequently searching. A little research never hurt anybody!

PRO TIP: Use long-tail keywords to form your blog topic strategy.[website.](http://website.com)

Quick Definition: All Things Meta

Meta tags are HTML elements that give search engines and users crucial information about what kind of content will be available on the page.

Meta titles (also known as title tags) are the page titles that appear in search engine results, at the top of the page, and in various other places (such as social media snippets). For blog articles, the title tag is automatically set to the headline of the piece.

Meta descriptions are the summaries of pages that appear below the meta titles. The purpose of a meta description is to further explain the meta title, outlining what the user can expect if they click through to your website.

The diagram shows a white rectangular box representing a search engine result snippet. Inside the box, the text is as follows:
AWD Digital: Web Design Melbourne | Website Design Agency
<https://awddigital.com.au/> ▼
We are a Melbourne based agency that uses elegant web designs and smart digital strategies to build your brand above the rest.

Two red arrows point from labels to the snippet. One arrow points from the label "Meta Title" to the first line of text. Another arrow points from the label "Meta Description" to the third line of text.

Nothing urges users to **click on your site** over others

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Meta titles and descriptions are some of the most overlooked items on SEO checklists, but they are actually some of the most important to get right.

Why? Because they're likely to be the first thing the user sees before they even get to your website. As a result, they facilitate most of your traffic by helping users decide whether or not to click on your page from search engine results.

To attract more traffic to your site, keep these quick tips in mind:

- Limit meta titles to 55 characters (including spaces and punctuation)
- Keep your meta description, punchy, informative and/or actionable

- Include a keyword or key phrase in the meta description or meta title
- Your meta title should appeal to something your users want; if the article includes exclusive expert tips or will help users solve a problem, reveal this upfront in the title.

PRO TIP: For example, you can replace your meta title 'Root Canal FAQs' with 'Is Root Canal Painful? And 7 Other Root Canal FAQs'.

You're giving up the chance to optimise URLs

26

A URL is not just a page address.

To Google and other search engines, a URL also provides a strong signal that is indicative of the type of content on that particular page. Therefore, it's important to optimise your URLs so that search engines can recognise your pages as relevant content. If you achieve this, your page will have a better chance of ranking higher for that search query.

You can optimise your URLs in the following ways:

- **Ensure your URL is as short as possible.** Keeping it succinct makes it easy for your users to remember. A shorter URL is also likely to match more queries on search engines than a long URL.

- **Use targeted keywords in your URL.** This will help search engines connect the right audience to your page. Ideally, you should use the exact keyword or phrase that your customers are searching for. This is difficult for the home page but should be easy for blogs, categories and product pages – but always remember to keep the URL short and sweet.
- **Don't use capital letters in your URL.** Capital letters actually make URLs more difficult to read, and stylistically, search engine protocol dictates that everything should be in lowercase.

PRO TIP: Keep in mind that users also look at URLs before clicking!

You edited your URLs without a **301 redirect**

27

Before you go ahead and optimise your URLs, be wary of the risks involved. **To a search engine, changing a URL is the same as removing a page.** If you change all your old URLs, this can destroy all the hard work you've done to build those pages up to their current ranking. It can also cause broken links across any other websites that have linked to your page, ruining the valuable backlinks you've earned over time.

This can be avoided with a 301 redirect. A 301 redirect is a piece of code that is added to different levels of your site. It lets Google know that you've still got that great content, and if someone clicks on an old URL, they'll be redirected to your new URL.

Bottom line: you won't lose customers, rankings or traffic, and you'll also have the opportunity to optimise your URL.

Other databases contain **conflicting** information about your business

28

If you've recently changed your business name, address, or phone number, then you need to familiarise yourself with NAP data. Trust us, it's a lot more important (and livelier) than it sounds!

NAP data stands for name, address, and phone number: the crucial details of your business that need to remain consistent. Essentially, NAP data serves as your modern-day directory, and for search engines to pick up the right information and attract new leads, your NAP data must be harmonious across every social media profile, your website information, and the information about your business that appears on other websites.

When this data is inconsistent, search engines will not know which information is most accurate. If your website shows

one address, for example, and another website displays your old address, this variance can confuse search engines and direct your potential customers elsewhere.

If an aspect of NAP data has recently changed for your business, ensure you check the following places to update your NAP data information:

- Google My Business
- Local business listings
- Yellow Pages online listings
- Any relevant resource websites for your industry, such as Zomato or TripAdvisor.

And that's just the tip of the **iceberg**.

These SEO tips will give you a strong foundation for creating a lead-generating, high-ranking best practice website that ultimately drives more sales for your business.

At the end of the day, just remember:

- **It's all about the user** – when in doubt, ask yourself how you use websites, and make the user experience as high-speed and straightforward as possible.
- **High-performing content** comes down to search query relevance, uniqueness, up-to-date information and word length, as compared against competitor content.

- **Use SEO tools to your advantage** – don't pass up the chance to review your analytics or improve the way you approach something.
- **SEO trends and search engine best practices** are always changing, so ensure you're staying ahead of the game with the right research.

Keep these tips in mind and you'll be well on your way to achieving organic online growth!

Book your free 30-minute strategy session today!

Want to go past the tip of the iceberg?

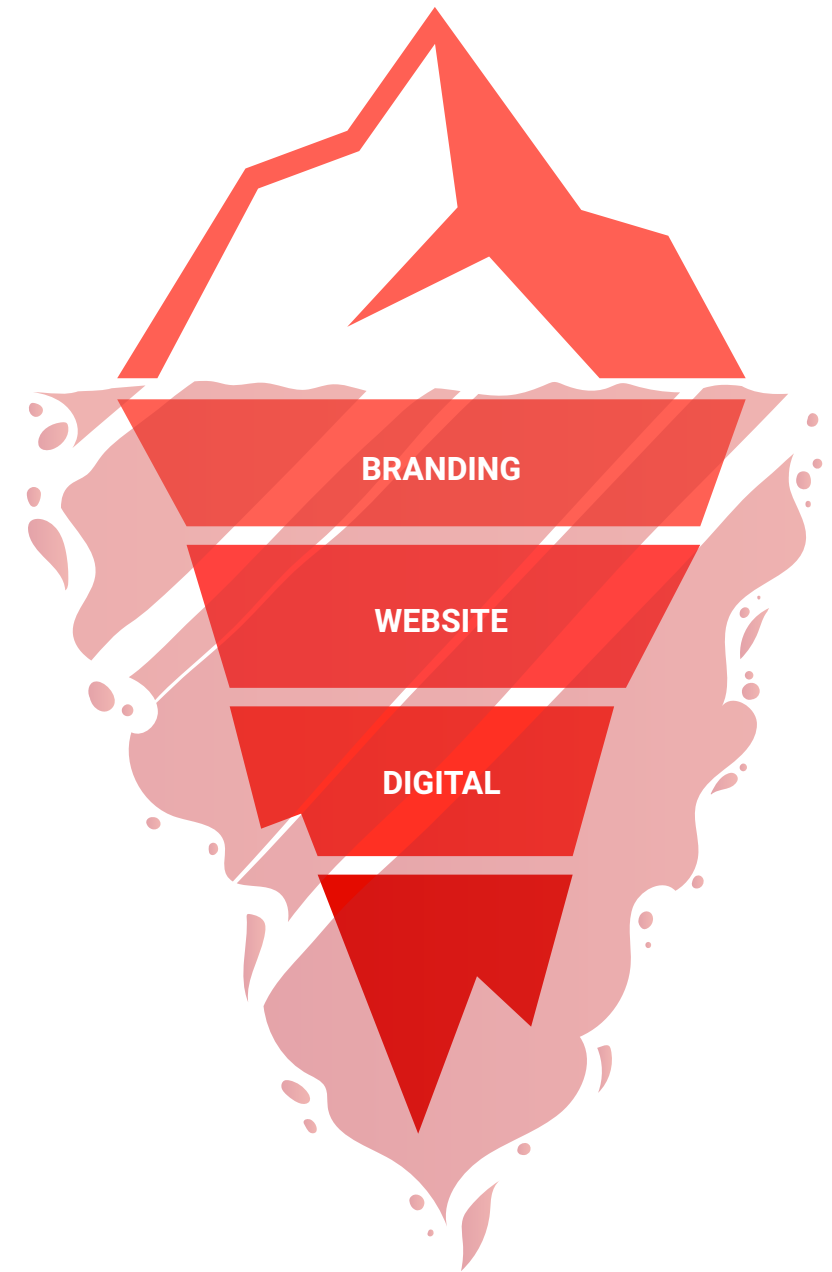
SEO is a tough beast to tame on your own. But with us in your corner, you'll see the results that will bring in the level of growth you've been trying to achieve. In fact, we want to kick off the process with a free one-on-one SEO session – tailored specifically to your business.

In your **30-minute strategy session**, you'll receive:

- A highly personalised SEO audit based on your current website
- Actionable SEO advice that targets your specific obstacles and goals
- Exclusive insights into pockets of growth your business can capitalise on.

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