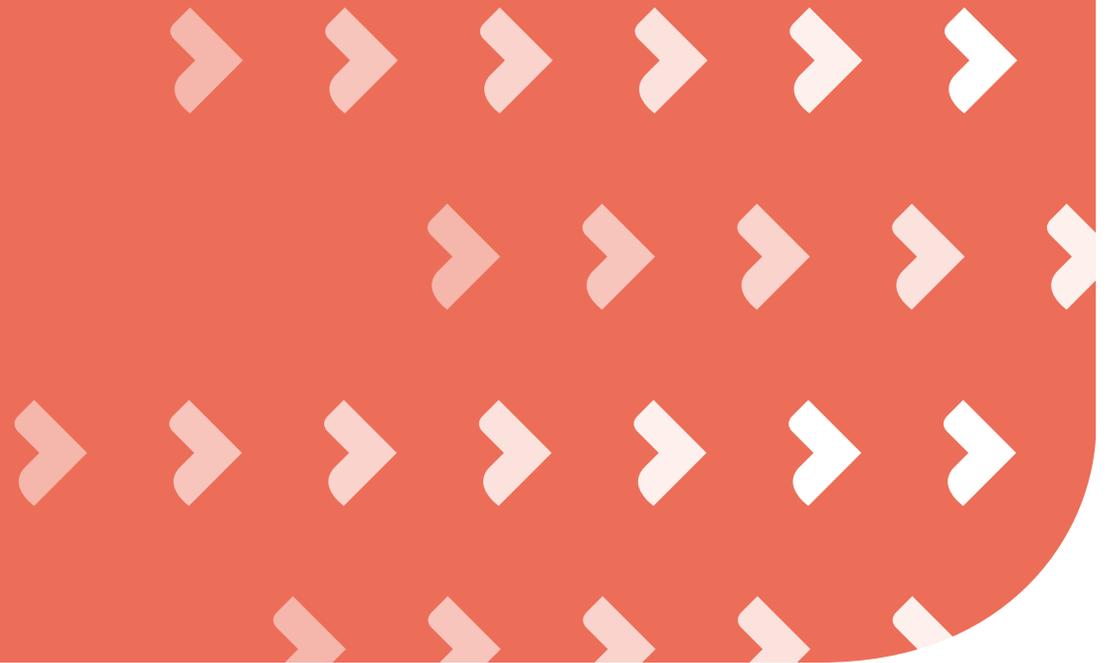# 19 Important SEO Terms Demystified

If you have clicked on this article, you understand how important it is that your company website attracts as many visitors, or future clients, as possible. Understanding the process of Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is a foundational necessity in today's business environment. The following guide will give you a working knowledge of the elements and terms that comprise SEO. If you want your business to rank on page one, but have been confused by the jargon and phrases used to describe the elements of SEO, keep reading!

SEO is a process or series of actions, not a switch. In other words, ranking on the first page of Google can only be achieved by implementing numerous steps. However, you can't make an SEO plan if you don't understand the words and phrases used to describe the steps you will need to take. To that end, we have detailed 19 of the most commonly used and critical SEO-related terms to demystify them.

HERE ARE THE 19 CRITICAL SEO TERMS:

1 Search engine Optimization (SEO)

2 On-page SEO

3 Off-page SEO

4 Keywords

5 Long-tail Keywords

6 Keyword Density

7 Keyword Research

8 SERP

9 Page rank

10 Meta Descriptions

11 Indexing

12 Internal and External links

13 Link Building

14 Linkbait

15 Landing Page

16 Search Engine Marketing

17 Pay-per-click (PPC)

18 Responsive Web design

19 Image Alt-tags

1. SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) describes how websites and blogs can persuade Google to show their pages to people searching for a product or service they sell. SEO is a core component of any digital marketing strategy.

Using SEO best practices to guide content creation or optimize existing website content enables search engines like Google to understand what your company offers and match it to search terms. This makes it easier for people looking to buy the product or service you sell to find your company website online. Google, Bing and the other search engines are constantly trying to determine the best match for the words and phrases entered into their search bar. The goal of SEO is to persuade Google that your website holds the best answer to the query entered. To achieve this goal, follow the best practices explained here. For a more detailed explanation of these steps, click here.

2. SEO: ON-PAGE

The term On-Page refers specifically to the tactics and steps you should employ on your website. These include both content and technical steps that help Google understand the services you offer. Ensure that you use phrases and terms that a client searching for what you sell might use (keywords) in your website copy and headings.

When Google is looking at your website and deciding where to rank it within the search results, they also look at different elements to better understand your business and how it aligns with the searcher's intent. These include the URL or website address, the HTML

code, the webpage's titles and how you describe images.

3. SEO: OFF-PAGE

Off-page SEO describes actions you should take outside of your website that will help persuade Google that you offer the best solutions to the query entered by the searcher. These include linking to authoritative websites, which provide credibility, and links to healthy social media channels. The more likes, comments and followers you have on your Facebook and Instagram accounts, the more likely it is for Google to put your website at the front of the search results. Anything you do to publicize your company and bring people to your site is considered Off-Page SEO.

4. KEYWORDS

When a potential client is searching for a solution to a business problem, most will turn to Google for help. The words and phrases they use to describe what they are looking for are "keywords" and "long-tail keywords." Understanding the words potential customers use when searching for a product or service you sell is called Keyword Research. Including these keywords in your website content is integral to On-Page SEO. They also form the backbone of paid digital marketing campaigns. For example, if you are in the home remodeling business, you will want Google to show your company's website to people searching for "home renovation" or "kitchen remodeling." Using these terms on your site tells Google that you may be an excellent answer to searches like "home remodelers" and, therefore, your website should appear within the search results.

5. LONG-TAIL KEYWORDS

Long-tail keywords combine three or more words and demonstrate the searcher's "intent." People often phrase search queries as questions, like "where can I find a dentist near me?" Searchers often include their location in a search query: "best roofer in Syracuse." Therefore, researching commonly used long-tail keywords is an essential SEO element. Another benefit of conducting research into long-tail keywords is that few companies are trying to optimize their website - resulting in less competition and, therefore, a better chance of ranking for the search term.

Imagine that you are a construction company that specializes in bathroom makeovers. Your competition will likely be trying to win search battles (rank first in the search engine results or SERP) for the keyword "contractor"- creating a lot of competition for that keyword. Optimizing your webpage content for more descriptive and longer search terms makes it possible to identify less competitive

opportunities. In other words, optimizing website content for the long-tail keyword phrase "expert bathroom remodelers" instead of just "remodeler" will likely yield better results.

6. KEYWORD DENSITY

When Google first launched, its algorithm relied heavily on keywords to match a searcher's query with a website that provided the service or product. In the early 1990s, if you wanted to rank at the top of the search results, all you had to do was use your keywords multiple times in your website content. This practice, known as "keyword stuffing," was quickly identified by Google as problematic as it did not deliver the best results from a searcher's perspective. Google promptly determined that the volume or "density" of keywords on a page was not a sufficiently accurate tool for assessing the page's content. Today, keyword density, content and the quality of writing are all "signals" used by Google when evaluating a webpage. The bottom line is that Google's algorithm has evolved to identify and reward well-written, unique content.

7. KEYWORD RESEARCH

Keyword research aims to establish the exact phrases and words used in the Google search box and their popularity. The greater the popularity of a particular keyword, the higher the competition for it is likely to be. Keyword research lets you map out a strategy for writing or optimizing website content. For instance, our kitchen remodeler may discover that five or six people in his town search for "specialty bathroom tile installers in Syracuse" every month. His research also indicates that his competition has not identified this long-tail Keyword as important. Thus armed with this knowledge, our bathroom remodeler would be well advised to create a blog titled "Installing specialty bathroom tile."

8. SERP

When a searcher enters a query into the Google search bar, the results are displayed on the Search Engine Results Page
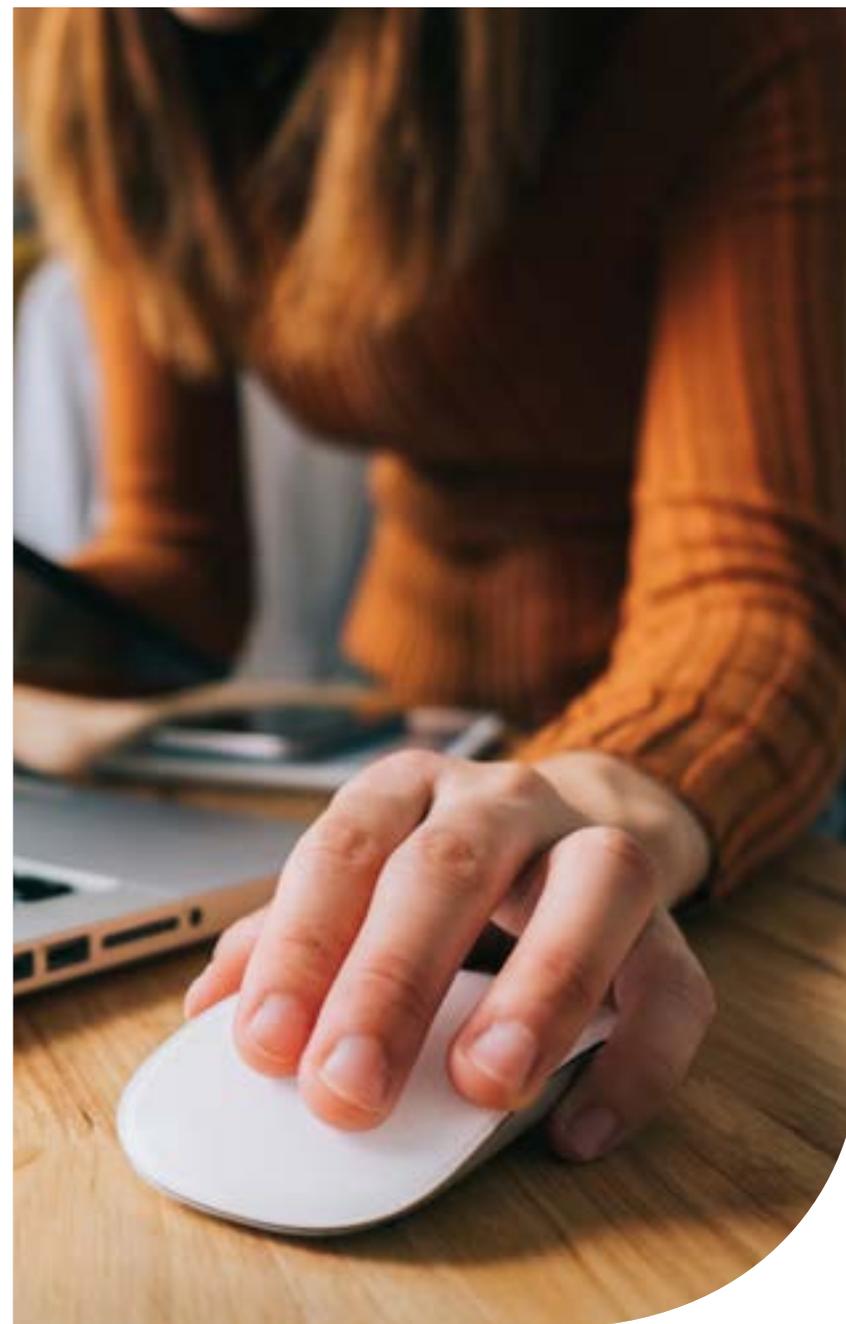
or SERP. The goal of all SEO is to persuade Google that your website or blog post is the best answer to that query, therefore, it should be displayed at the top of the search rankings.

9. PAGE RANKING

When Google answers a search query, it evaluates and then ranks thousands of possible websites. The closer your website appears to the top of this list, the more likely the prospect will click on it and visit your site.

10. META DESCRIPTIONS

Only Google knows the exact recipe they use for determining search ranking, however, there are a few technical steps that we know have a positive influence. Meta descriptions (also known as tags) are one such tool. The Meta description shows Google what a webpage or blog post is about, and it is the short description used in the search engine results page under the webpage title. It is best to keep these descriptions short (under 155 characters) and make sure you use your core keywords in them. Compelling Meta descriptions will draw the searcher to your website or blog -- so take your time to craft them! Let's take CenterState CEO's SERP result as an example.

11. INDEXING

The process of adding your website pages to search engines like Google is called "indexing." Google automatically "crawls" every webpage and blog post on a website- following every link, reading every title or tag, and assessing all content. Once Google has performed these tasks, they create an "index."

There are circumstances in which it is inadvisable to allow Google to "index" a page. For example, if you have a confirmation page that thanks a searcher for taking an action, like downloading an e-book, you may not want that page to appear in search results.

12. BACKLINKS: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL LINKS

As we mentioned before, the precise workings of the Google algorithm are a black box - only Google knows the exact recipe. However, we do know that Google will reward websites with higher search rankings if they have a good number of links to content within the site (internal links) and links to other quality websites.

A healthy combination of external and internal links shows Google that a site visitor is likely

META DESCRIPTION BREAKDOWN:

http://www.centerstateceo.com

CenterState CEO | Syracuse, NY Corporation...

CenterState CEO is an independent and forward thinking economic development strategist, business leadership organization and chamber of commerce; dedicated to ...

You've visited this page 2 times. Last visit: 4/3/22

META TAG

to get value from your webpage or blog. When building the number of links on your site, you must ensure that you only link to high-quality websites.

13. LINK BUILDING

Link building is the process of building your website's credibility and improving search ranking by creating links to other reputable websites. Building links to professional organizations or academia will show Google that you are trusted, which will be rewarded with higher SERP rankings.

14. LINK BAIT

If your website or blog post contains high-quality content, other websites may elect to link directly to it, clearly signaling to Google that your content is of high quality. This is particularly true if the linking website has a stellar reputation. Tools like infographics, comparison charts or in-depth expert-authored content can be very effective. The bottom line is that if you create valuable resources for others, they will likely want to link to it - a potent positive signal to Google.

15. LANDING PAGE

A "landing page" is the page a website visitor lands first upon; this may or may not be your homepage. The principle behind building landing pages is to minimize the steps it takes for a site visitor to find the thing for which they are searching. Landing pages are often used in digital advertising campaigns. They usually contain a way of capturing the site visitors' information and can also be used to schedule appointments or consultations.

16. SEARCH MARKETING

Search marketing describes methods of driving or attracting website visitors, including both paid and unpaid traffic. Typically, paid promotions are described as search engine marketing or SEM and involve paid search advertising. Unpaid methods of attracting site visitors use the SEO best practices we have discussed, sometimes described as "organic."

17. PAY-PER-CLICK (PPC)

Pay-per-click, or PPC, is an effective way to buy your way to the front of the Google SERP rankings. The advertiser defines the amount of money they are prepared to pay for a "click" that results in a site visit. Paid ads appear at the top of the SERP.

18. RESPONSIVE WEBPAGES & DESIGN

When designing a website, it is essential to remember that people use various devices to access the internet. Each of these devices has a different screen size; therefore, any webpage design must look good on numerous screen sizes - this is called "responsive" design.

19. IMAGE ALT-TAGS

Adding high-quality images or photography to your blog post or webpage is an excellent way of engaging with the reader. Images also create an opportunity to communicate your page or blogs with Google. However, Google can't "crawl" an image to understand what it shows, so we must use a written description or "Alt Image Tag" to let Google know what a picture or photograph depicts.

Remember, ranking on page one of Google requires a series of steps - it's a process, not a switch, and it will take time. On the other hand, once you have persuaded Google to present you at the top of the SERP rankings, they will continue to do so and today's efforts will be rewarded by future site visits and new customers!

Get help with your SE0 strategy with a Syracuse-based digital marketing expert. Link here to the service provider resource. Now that you have a basic understanding of the terms and steps that make up SEO, it's time to implement! Happy optimizing!

ABOUT CENTERSTATE CEO AND CLICK

CenterState CEO (Corporation for Economic Opportunity) is Central New York's independent and forward-thinking economic development strategist, business leadership organization, and chamber of commerce; dedicated to the success of its members and the prosperity of the region. CenterState CEO is proud to introduce Click, a digital platform providing solutions, resources, and connections for small businesses. Visit clickcny.com for more information.

For more information visit clickcny.com or email info@clickcny.com