SEO Quick Fixes: Part 4- *Basics & Blunders*

The last of a four part series designed to help the average website manager learn and apply some important fixes that are guaranteed to help any website's ranking.

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In the 1st installment we discussed the initial website cleanup process and the basic steps to take with your site to get everything in order. The 2nd installment dealt with search engines and how to interact with them. In our 3rd segment we explored some easy external options for marketing your site and increasing its desirability to both search engines and public. In this, our 4th and final installment I cover some of the basic blunders people make, some things easily overlooked and remind you of the often overlooked basics to website success.

Place necessary duplicate content into an image

Sometimes it is unavoidable, boring stuff like Legal statements, terms & conditions and disclaimers, etc can create duplicate content issues, even though Google says it won't. If you have a situation where you must lace this sort of copy on multiple pages, often times triggering duplicate content filters…try using an image for your copy instead(see next item), or condense to a .PDF linked to off page with a rel="nofollow", provided the copy doesn't have to be exactly on page.

No Text Images

So you wrote a great pitch line and layered it onto an image and it looks just beautiful now….if only the search engines could see it. If you place text in an image know that it is now invisible. All too often I come across websites where someone has inserted a great looking image with excellent keyword optimized copy…as a layer in the image!. What were they thinking?! All that great copy is now rendered useless to the search engines…why do it.?!

Instead, try using a JQuery layered text approach where the image is its own beast and the text floats across it as a separate item. Looks great, works great. Check out an example at ParkCityCPA.com

Quality, Useful, Informative Content

What if you wrote a masterpiece of online content and nobody found it? So many of my clients come to me with page after page of worthwhile articles and information that they want to share with the world. When I ask them who it would be targeted to and how the people would search for it, they haven't a clue.

Think it through before you write. What do people want to read? What are they looking for? Do some keyword research to help discover the topics being searched for and then write for that audience. Find out where the people are and then go there. Do not expect them to come looking for you, they won't. Quality, useful content was and is…King.

Focus

Find a way to be other than a general information site. Often time people try to be all things to all people when they would do better to find a niche and pursue it. Be the expert in that niche, then branch out. Build a reputation - then build on the reputation.

Do Keyword research

Really. Dig deep, go wide, find the extent of the playing field you are on and then evaluate where to focus. Remember, every page is an answer. Every page has one topic-one theme. Every page has a unique set of keywords. Every page should be the answer to someone's search effort. By the way, in case you haven't heard, skip the generic terms with a million views a month and focus more on the Longtail keywords. These can help you design your site, create traffic worthy hubs of information, gain loyal followers and links and ….Longtails convert so much better that less defined terms.
Don't know what Longtail keywords are? Google it.

Personalized annotations & Social Share

Add +1's and Google + badge to pages. Add a share bar. Include your social media links if you have them. Tip – focus your social media on the stuff which works, i.e. know where your customers are, how they share, and then participate. Nobody you want to connect with on Pinterest? Why would you be there?

Internal Links

Also known as InLinks, these are links you create within your website to interconnect all the pages in a structured manner. How you link, especially how many links go to a particular page, also indicates to the search engines which pages are likely more important than others. Tip – Try to limit the number of pages you link to from the home page. The pages linked to from here should be the most important pages, like category heading pages and other highly sought hubs.

Tip- be sure that your InLinks point to the canonical version of the page. This is an easy place to get screwed up if you aren't careful.

Improve the use of space above the fold

Lastly…there is a growing tendency among certain design types to have long scrolling pages of misc. content on one page. It is almost fashionable to see how many different topics and such you can cram on a page. My three suggestions are as follows:

1) Don't do this. It really does create a poor user experience for not only the person viewing it but also for the search bots crawling the site as well.

2) If you must have numerous panels of information then make sure each one is designed so it naturally (visually) leads into the next one. I recently reviewed a client's website where the panels were spaced in such a way that there was no clue that more information existed below the fold. Seriously, it took three techies a week of looking at it before they "discovered" the additional information!

3) Too much content? Use Tabs, Toggles or an expanding div. Don't use frames!

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