



Feed The Goog

Chris Bachman | December 01, 2016 (revised)

Google has made two statements in the past; one a few years ago and the other quite recently, that I think pretty much tell us all where The Great and Powerful Goog wants to take the Search Engine Results Pages(SERPs).

A few years back I recall one of their people stating quite openly, and clearly with a lot of truth, that the Internet had become a wasteland littered with crappy websites. Their job was fast becoming one of cleaning up the SERPs so as to provide their customers (you and I) with the best possible product (results). Made perfect sense.

Therefore, it came as no real surprise to me that as The Goog's ability to evaluate websites improved that they would begin to close in on "...making the first page of the SERP provide the best possible websites available..." for any search term, or in Goog Speak, for the currently apparent search....

So I thought I would jot down all the items I had decided that Google apparently considers as positive ranking factors and build a website that reflected as many as possible. Just to see what would happen....

I selected a new client who has a property management company in a resort town with lots of competition. Their existing website was a pitiful collection of four slapped together pages that were linked so poorly as to be barely navigable. It was one of the worst sites I had ever seen and ranked on the 3rd or 4th page for only 3 search terms. It was at the bottom.

My list of what to feed the Goog was really pretty straightforward when I got right down to it.

Quality: Clean, up to date **code** was the starting point here so everything was to HTML 5 standards.

Useful: Provide the visitor truly **useful content** and have a sufficient **quality and quantity** so as to be considered Authoritative.

Attractive: **Convey professionalism** and make the environment inviting and comfortable.

User Friendly: Starts with intuitive **navigation** and continues through making the site **mobile friendly**. This is either a flexible design or a responsive one and one that avoids Flash. In taking a hint from Google I did make it a priority to have a mobile friendly site.

Community Visibility: By this I mean **social media mentions** as well as **links to the site** that are freely given from others in that "community" and as such represent true "votes of confidence" in the subject site.

On-Page Best Practices: Proper **in-linking**, well written **Title and Description** tags, **optimized file size**, proper use of **H1 and H2**, alt tag **descriptions for linked images**, pages and URL **crafted for specific topics**.



Analytics Aware: All was done with an eye to knowing that Google likes to see indicators that the page you created is worthy of the rank it holds, i.e.; **Bounce rate** (lower the better), **onsite time** and **# of page views** (higher the better).

Being a good Goog Head: This means simply playing the game. Google sets their rules and then favors those who play by them. Create a **urllist.txt** or **sitemap.xml** and submit it. That also means **registering your website** with Google Webmaster Tools. And of course, **activating Analytics** on your site. Why wouldn't you? But you have no idea how many websites I review where the basics like this are simply overlooked.

Seem like a lot to keep track of? Not really. You either do these things or you don't. If you do it becomes habit and you reap the rewards. If you don't then your client is receiving a less than quality product from you and your days in this business are numbered.

So, the end result of all this for our management company client? Well, we built out the site from its original four measly pages to a robust and well organized 29 pages. One week after launch we had one or more Top 10 positions for 38 of 40 terms we had targeted. Six months later that hasn't changed. Our client owns the SERPs for their business type and couldn't be happier. We feel pretty good about it too.

btw – I should mention that the client still has not implemented the social media and linking that I had recommended so these results are without those factors.

Summary

Our impression from this project was that there are things like huge changes to a site that will trigger a manual review. In this case the manual review resulted in the site being awarded a large number of page one positions which have turned out to be apparently well deserved as we still have them. We believe that Google wants the best possible websites on page one and our client benefited greatly because, simply put, that was what was delivered. Want to learn more? Email Us at [ProClass Web Design](mailto:Chris@ProClassWebDesign.com) or 435.631.2595



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