

2021 SEO Checklist

Getting SEO right is essential to your Google ranking today and after Google launches the Page Experience update. Use this SEO checklist to make sure you're getting the most out of SEO, search, content, and Google.

□ Setup Search Tools

Google and Bing have powerful search tools designed to help your website succeed and rank well in search engines. The data provided by these tools can help you make adjustments to your site, learn about your readers, and see how keywords are performing.

SEO To Do:

- Setup [Google Search Console](#): this free tool helps you monitor, maintain, and troubleshoot your site's presence in Google Search results and improve how Google sees your site.
- Setup [Google Analytics](#): lets you see data and insights into who is visiting your site, how people are using your site, and the number of site visitors.
- Configure [Bing Webmaster Tools](#): know how your site performs and is viewed by Bing and use this data to improve your site performance in this search engine.

□ Create and Upload an XML Sitemap.

An [XML sitemap](#) tells search engines what your important pages are and how they are connected. Search engines use the sitemap to navigate your website to understand what kind of content you have on your website and how pages are linked.

SEO To Do:

- Follow the sitemap guidelines and recommendations from [Google](#), [Bing](#), and other search engines.
- Follow the instructions in [Submit Your Sitemap to Search Engines](#).

□ Optimize Your Keywords.

Keywords are the terms, phrases, and words people enter into search engines like Google, Firefox, Yahoo, DuckDuckGo, and Bing. Keywords are the digital voice of your readers. Keywords give you insight into how you can best support your readers.

SEO To Do:

- Find Your Keywords: use a free tool like [SearchVolume.io](#) to find your [top 20 keywords](#).
- Learn About Your Competitors: use a free tool like [SEMRush](#) to tell you what your competitors are and are not ranking for. Use this information to compete directly with your competitors and take advantage of missed keyword opportunities.
- Learn About Search Intent: [search intent](#) is the problem, question, or query your readers want solved. This drives the terms people enter in or ask of search

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engines. To learn about search intent use [Google Search Console](#), [AlsoAsked](#), and Google. Pay attention to the list of phrases displayed when you type a question or sentence with your keyword in the search box and look at the Searches related to... box to learn about popular searches related to your keyword.

- Use Your Keywords Correctly: make sure your URLs, page titles, headings, image ALT tags, meta descriptions, link anchor text, CTAs, social media posts, and content use your keywords.

- Focus on Content Quality.
The quality of your content makes or breaks your search engine ranking. Search engines like Google and Bing are very smart and only rank web pages that include relevant, clear, trustworthy, and helpful information.

SEO To Do:

- Write Like You Speak: use simple and obvious language just like you do when you're speaking. Use conversational, friendly, and jargon-free words.
 - Clean Content Layout: use white space, short paragraphs, simple sentences, lists, subtopics, and headers to make your content readable on all devices.
 - Use Keywords Naturally: don't cram keywords and phrases into your content. When it comes to keywords – less is more.
 - Write the Right Content: do your research, write an outline, and then write. Don't obsess over word count. Write naturally and stop when you have told the reader what they need to know.
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- Do On-Page SEO.
On-page SEO includes page formatting, keywords, website layout, content structure, links, image tags, meta descriptions, and more. An optimal on-page SEO strategy makes it easy for search engines to give people the correct answers to their questions.

SEO To Do:

- Write Unique Meta Descriptions: the meta description is displayed below your URL in search engine results. In 155 characters you need to clearly tell readers what your page is about and what they will learn. Include a call to action, your page keyword, and tell readers what they'll learn from your page.
- Write Unique Titles: every page needs a unique page title that tells search engines and readers what the page is about. Your page titles need to include your page keyword and describe the page content.
- Write Unique H1 Tags: the H1 tag helps search engines and readers understand what the page is about. Your H1 tag and other headings help grab reader attention and help key content stand out. Give every page an informative and enticing H1 that uses your primary keyword.

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- Use Image ALT Tags: image ALT tags describe the image or what the image represents and help the visually impaired and search engines better understand what the page represents. Make sure every image has an ALT tag that describes the image and includes your page keyword.
 - Use Internal Links: internal links tell search engines how your website pages are connected and help readers navigate your website. Make sure every page contains relevant internal links with anchor text that uses your page keyword.
- Do Technical SEO.
- Technical SEO is critical to ensuring your website meets the technical demands and standards of search engines and helps improve your organic search ranking. Technical SEO includes steps to make your website easy to crawl, keeps it secure and safe, delivers a positive user experience, and tells search engines you have a website of value.

SEO To Do:

- Use HTTPS: HTTPS gives your users (and you) an extra layer of security by encrypting data and protecting it from hackers. Make sure your URLs start with HTTPS and that a padlock is displayed in the browser URL bar.
- Measure Site Speed: search engines and readers have zero patience for slow websites. Google has made site speed a ranking factor in its Page Experience update. Use [Google's Page Speed Insights tool](#) to know how quickly your site loads and how you can speed up your site.
- Get Mobile-Friendly: your website must load quickly and clearly on mobile devices. Make sure your website loads quickly, the menus are easy to use, the buttons are easy to click, and the layout is highly readable.
- Fix Broken Pages and Links: audit your site and fix all broken links. Make this a priority. Search engines and readers do not want to waste time on websites and pages with links that take them nowhere or don't deliver the expected result. Use a free tool like [Dr.LinkCheck](#) to scan your site for broken links.

Call us at 888-241-4205 to talk about Google Page Experience, SEO, and your website. The team at Know Agency is here to help you.

Who is Know Agency?

Know Agency is focused on improving your discoverability, so your business, products, and services appear when your prospects and customers are searching. Our team focuses on SEO for medium and large businesses across a number of verticals. We've worked with clients such as CA Technologies, Jabil Manufacturing, Terranova Security, Emory University, Verifi, and Garden of Life. Should your business need complimentary digital marketing services, our network of vetted providers is available to deliver a successful solution for your business. Know Agency is headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, and serves clients internationally.