

5 Key Questions for Local Media SEO Success

Below are 5 questions that will help you define your vision for long-term search engine success.

Great search engine optimization (SEO) starts with a clear vision for how to create useful and compelling content and how to engage users. The practice of great SEO is not a few consultants sprinkled here and there. Rather, it is accomplished through a general understanding of how people search and how search engines address searchers' needs.

01 What is authoritative about your site?

Why should someone visit your site versus another? Search engines try to return the most authoritative result for a user's query, and SEO will be an uphill battle if you don't have a good answer to this question. Search engine optimization helps ensure that you get the best results from the content you have, but it doesn't pull rabbits out of hats. Having a clear vision for what makes your site and content great will facilitate and organize your SEO efforts.

02 Why are people going to link to your content?

It's good to be authoritative, but that alone does not mean that people will link to your site, and links are a major factor in search engine ranking. To get links, you need to foster content that is so remarkable that people are driven to share. In the words of [Seth Godin](#).

“Remarkability lies in the edges. The biggest, fastest, slowest, richest, easiest, most difficult. It doesn't always matter which edge, more that you're at (or beyond) the edge.”

Aim to be remarkable with the content you collect and publish. And, make sure your users are part of your content strategy; some of them are sure to be remarkable too.

03 What does your site look like to a search engine crawler?

Until you learn to see your site from a search engine's point of view, SEO will feel foreign and artificial. Search engines crawl links and index words and pictures. Crawl your site like a search engine and look for useful information. Are you overwhelmed by thousands of links? Is it hard to get to actual content? Is it unclear what a given page is about? If so, search engines are probably experiencing the same thing.

There are a number of tools that allow you to look at your site with all of the scripting and graphical elements removed, similar to how a crawler sees it. The simplest to use is the “Text-only version” view available when you click on the “Cached” link in a Google search result listing.

I also like the Search Spider Simulator that is included with the Foxy SEO add-on for the Firefox web browser.

Local Search in Europe | Local Matters Blog ☆

May 21, 2010... Last week, we were thrilled to have members of the European Directories online product teams on site for some future planning.

www.localmatters.com/blog/...insight-into-the-future-of-european-directories/ -Cached



04 How does SEO fit in to your planning and execution process?

Knowledge of search behavior and search engine mechanics is relevant to every decision you make as a web publisher, from your high-level strategy to the technology you use. Many organizations treat SEO as an external function, but you will spend less on optimization and get more in return by having SEO incorporated into your business processes. This means training existing staff in SEO, and having SEO specialists participate in content development, product requirements and all other aspects of web publishing. And most importantly, make sure SEO is 'at the table' when you do your long-range planning. A small investment early on can have big benefits down the road.

About Our Expert

Nico Brooks consults with Local Matters on the search strategy of our local search and advertising products. A recognized expert in search engine management and advertising optimization, Nico has numerous published articles, research papers and conference speaking engagements with organizations, such as Search Engine Strategies, AdTech and SearchEngineWatch.com. A self-professed "data nut", Nico combines his mathematical analysis with a passion for local business to design and develop methodologies for maximizing web site and web marketing performance. Nico holds a bachelor's in mathematics from Earlham College in Indiana.

05 What happens if you get no traffic from Google?

Defining your vision for authoritative and remarkable content is important, but a local search publishing strategy that relies on Google as its primary source of traffic is risky at best. Google is increasingly directing local category and business name searches to its own Maps and Place Pages. If your business model doesn't hold up without Google, you are probably expecting too much from SEO. Building content and a user experience that cultivates repeat visits and traffic from partners and social networks is good overall strategy, and is likely to benefit your SEO efforts as well.

Transform your online presence. Contact us to schedule a demo, view a customer list, or learn more about our solutions.



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