Five white hat search engine optimisation techniques

By Charl Vollmer   5 Jul 2016

Search engine optimisation has pros and cons, like most things in life. With that said, there are two ways of doing SEO: the white hat way and the black hat way. Black hat SEO can yield positive short-term results, but the long-term results can be harmful.

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The following are five white hat techniques that you could use:

1. Create quality content

Before creating quality content you first need to understand what quality content is. Quality content must fulfill the following:

1. Provide real value to your readers
2. Must be unique
3. Your content must be actionable
4. Content that's easy to read

5. Long form content

How does quality content impact websites?

Quality content makes your site useful to visitors. When visitors find that your website is valuable, they will return and might even link to your website. When searchers want answers, Google displays the best results to keep them satisfied, so if you are creating mediocre content then, unfortunately, you might not end up on the first page of Google.

Protip: Create content for people and not search engines.

2. Use Schema Markup

Schema Markup is one of the least utilised techniques in SEO.

But what is Schema Markup? Schema markup is coding that gives search engines a better understanding of your content. You can add schema markup to your website with Google's Structured Data Markup Helper.

Examples of Schema Markup include:

1. Articles
2. Book reviews
3. Events
4. Local businesses
5. Movies
6. Products
7. Restaurants
8. Software applications
9. TV episodes

10. TV episodes with ratings

A study recently revealed that [websites using schema actually ranked four positions higher in the SERPs](#).

3. Titles and metadata:

Your website has different HTML elements. Two important HTML elements on your web page are your title and meta descriptions. Title tags and meta descriptions should include your targeted keyword. These are important for search engines, as this is used to index your web pages.

What is a title tag?

Your title tag describes your title of the web page and contributes to your on-page SEO. The title tag may be the most important on-page factor as this is always displayed above the URL in search results.

Protips for crafting the best title for your web page:

1. The title should less than 70 characters long
2. Every web page should have unique titles
3. Use keyword in title tags and closer to the front of the title tag
4. Avoid keyword stuffing your titles

5. Include your brand name in beginning in the title or at the back

What is a meta description?

A meta description is a summary of your web page content that is always displayed in the SERPs. Meta descriptions do not have an impact with google's ranking algorithm, but can increase your clickthrough rates.

Protip for creating meta descriptions:

1. Meta descriptions should be between 150-160 characters long
2. Every web page should have their own unique meta description

3. Avoid keyword spamming

4. On-page SEO

On-page SEO is important, as it influences your ranking ability in search engines and is the foundation to your marketing campaign.
Laying a strong foundation will ensure that you are one step ahead of your competition. On-page SEO is often ignored, but in actual fact can boost your website in the SERPs.

Attending to the following on-page factors can do miracles to your website:

1. Optimise your website for speed
2. Internal linking to valuable web pages
3. Correct rel="canonical" use
4. Remove broken links
5. Clean HTML coding
6. Include keyword in URL
7. Include keyword in page title
8. Include keywords in internal anchor text
9. Keyword in H1 text
10. Include keyword in image alt text
11. Include keyword in content (about three times)

12. Keyword in meta-description

5. Natural Backlinks:

Links pointing to your website is a vote that your content is useful. One of Google's major ranking factors are backlinks, so in essence backlinks equal higher rankings. Not all links are equal; there are good links and then there are bad links that you need to steer clear of. The links your web page receives should be relevant to your topic.

A classic example of a good link would be as follows:
Your web page topic is about cats and someone with a website links to you discussing cat food.

A bad link can harm your website. Bad links can show in the following form:

1. Spammy websites2. Adult content websites

The more quality links your website receives, the better your ranking within search engines. When performing a link building campaign, remember that quality over quantity is important.

Is there anything I missed? What would you add to this list?

ABOUT CHARL VOLLMER

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