

SEO: Why Search Engine Optimization is More Important Than Ever

Based on a webinar presented by Michael MacMillan of [MacMillan Search](#) on Wednesday, May 20, 2020

Search engine optimization (SEO) is about improving the search engine results for your business so you can attract more people to your website, and make sure the people coming to your site take the action you want them to take. Learn how to keep your clients informed and up-to-date using your homepage's metadata and Google My Business; determine the types of keywords that drive people to your site and what is currently driving traffic using Google Search Console; and how to schedule your content using Google Trends.

Using your Search Engine Results Page (SERP)

SERP are the pages displayed by search engines in response to a query by a user. Most people will search your brand at some point before or during their working relationship with you. The top result for these types of queries is almost always a [Google My Business informed knowledge panel](#) and your homepage. What they see when they search your brand is crucial.

Home Page Title	Home Page Meta Description	Crafting the Home Page Result
<p>Things to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directly influences your search ranking • Mostly driven by branded searches • Search engines look for keywords. The closer keywords are to the front of the title, the better • There is limited space, don't use "home" in title • Structure: "Your top-level service offering or product" "Brand Name" how you got started 	<p>Things to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not directly influence search ranking • Any keywords & variants being searched will be bolded • Make it readable & compelling to increase clicks 	<p>Things to ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it the content you defined? • Is it truncated? • Would you click on it?

Google My Business (GMB)

[Google My Business](#) is a free tool that can help you create and manage your Google listing, which appears when customers search for you on Google and Google Maps. It can help you attract new customers and share compelling information about your business.

Opportunities:

- Keep it up to date (e.g. mark yourself temporarily closed if applicable during the COVID-19 pandemic)
- Edit your business description (e.g. any service changes due to public health directives)
- Review for hours & services disclaimer
- Add a COVID-19 update post to your profile

Additional details at [Google's Guidance for Businesses affected by COVID-19](#)

Keywords

Keywords or key phrases on your website help match you with your potential customer when they search using those keywords or phrases. Selecting high-quality, relevant keywords is essential.

Discover Keywords

Use [Google Search Console](#) to:

- Determine which pages are the most visited
- Determine which keywords drove that traffic
- Look for keywords in striking distance of your goal to be on the first page, so you can incorporate them on your site

Striking distance keywords:

- Keywords where your average position in a search results for those terms is in the 4th to 12th position. When you are in this position, a lot of the signals to search engines are there.
A battle for attention (click through rates and time that a user spends viewing a document)

How to Optimize Striking Distance

Ask these questions:

- What do the top of the SERPS look like?
- Is the data shown in searches the data you defined?
- Is your information truncated?
- How can you create better content than the top results?
- What other relevant questions can you answer?

New Content Ideas

- What questions being asked have monthly searches? Use [Keyword Surfer](#) to determine the volume.
- Tourism will be back, how can you engage people while they are in the discovery stage? What is your (new) success metric? (e.g. Newsletter, mailing list, etc.)

<https://www.macmillansearch.com/blog/google-search-console-for-newbies/>

Historical Trends

Historical trends display the trends for a selected period of time – 24 hours, last week, three months, or a year. Determine the best time to post or boost posts using [Google Trends](#) to see historically, when searches for your content subject peaked.

