

# 9 Facts About Search Engine Optimisation That All Businesses Need To Know

Statistics like "51% of all Australians research online before making a purchase" highlights the importance of getting your site high in the organic (free listings) results of search engines when a person searches for a word/s related to your business. The process of making adjustments to your site so it displays high for keywords your target audience are using is called [Search Engine Optimisation](#) (SEO).

Now I am not going to kid you - SEO isn't a quick and easy task. If you don't employ an expert, the following guidelines should make you more informed and highlight the key things to get you started so you can improve your site's ranking. You will find most of your competition probably has done nothing down this path, so just doing a little will help your site greatly.

We have based the following on Google, mainly because most Australians use this search engine.

Here are the top 7 things you should know about SEO:

## Fact 1 – SEO is a long, ongoing process

Optimising your site is an ongoing process that needs constant attention. When a new site is launched, it can take Google anywhere from 3 weeks to 3 months to even find the site and store it in their database, and then another couple of months for the site to earn a place in search results.

Then once your site is up and running, boosting your PageRank (the scale that Google uses to determine the importance of your site and therefore where it ranks in searches) takes time and effort – updating keywords, writing new content and organising links are all time-consuming, and then you have to wait for Google to find your changes. So be patient.

## Fact 2 – Do your keyword research

You need to use keywords throughout your site so it gets listed in the search engine results when a consumer conducts a search using those words. Therefore, you need to know what words your target audience are searching for so you can use them in your content.

This is called keyword research – first you brainstorm a big list of all the words and phrases related to your business (even ask your clients), then use keyword generator tools to narrow down this list. You also need to look at the competition for keywords and choose more specific words – “massage” is far too common, so try something like “corporate massage Sydney”. Keyword research is essential for SEO – [learn more about it here](#).

## Fact 3 – Quality content is the key to success

The hardest thing about optimising your [website design](#) is creating content that is balanced between the needs of search engines and the needs of your target market. If it's too SEO-focused, it will be gibberish for users but if you don't use enough keywords you, won't rank well on search engines. The main thing is to only use keywords in your copy when they make sense and not to overuse them (the recommended is about 3 of the same keyword per page). Try to use variations of your main keywords through the text, because search engines will pick up on those too. Overall, the best thing

you can do is research your content thoroughly, tailor it to the needs of your business and write it well – the search engines can tell if your copy is good, and they'll reward you for it.

#### **Fact 4 - You need keywords throughout your whole site**

Many people are under the misconception that you only need to list your key words on your home page - although that is important, it is just as important to use them throughout the site and adjust your keywords to the content of each page. Keywords are important to be considered for your page title, meta keywords, descriptions (for our clients - you can easily input this in [thewebconsole.com](https://www.thewebconsole.com) when you edit a page), headings, and content.

#### **Fact 5 - Black hat techniques don't work**

When SEO first became a hot topic, some 'smart' people tried to trick the search engines by keyword stuffing (putting long lists of keywords in pages), using invisible text (putting keywords in the background colour so users couldn't read it but search engines could) and creating fake pages. These techniques worked in the short-term, but soon the search engines figured out what they were doing and penalised them. Now, the search engines are on the lookout for unethical things like this and will immediately ban any website that engages in black hat SEO. So no matter what anyone tells you about how quickly it can boost your ranking don't do it! It's definitely not worth it.

#### **Fact 6 - Search engines can't read images**

Take advice before having a flash site or one with lots of images and not much content. This can go against you as the search engines don't register words that appear in images. This is also important to consider for when you use flash in navigation, as keywords importance is also measured here. For our clients, to make it easier for Google to log your site and content, your site is automatically mapped in text (see the site map at the bottom of your site) and in XML - so every time you make a change to your navigation or add a page, it is automatically adjusted.

#### **Fact 7 - The playing field can change at any time**

The algorithm that Google uses to analyse and rank websites is not guaranteed – Google can choose to change it whenever they want. Websites that don't keep up-to-date with the changes will slide down the rankings and get overtaken by sites that follow the new algorithm. It's very important that your [website developer](#) or [SEO consultant](#) stays up-to-date with the algorithm so they can advise you or make any changes quickly and keep your site ranking high.

If you are serious about your SEO and want to focus on it as a strategy for getting customers, you will need to employ a professional to help you, not only to keep up-to-date, but also to do keyword research, update your content and get other websites to link to yours.

#### **Fact 8 – Updating your site regularly will make you search engine friendly**

As mentioned, SEO isn't a one-off thing – you can't write really good copy with lots of keywords and then leave it on your site for 2 years. You need to constantly update and improve it by adding in new articles, [newsletters](#), updating statistics and product descriptions, rewriting and tweaking copy and fixing broken links. Changes like this will draw search engine spiders back to your site, which will help you climb the ranks. Constantly updating also ensures you are still using the right keywords to reach your market and that your content is fresh and interesting for the humans that use your site!

## Fact 9 – Getting links is essential

So you've done your keyword research and have great copy on your site, but do you have any other sites linking to you? The content of your site is only half the battle in SEO –you need to have lots of other websites linking to yours so the search engines think you are important enough to put at the top of their rankings. Don't get links using schemes like linkfarms, because Google will penalise you for this, and also try to avoid reciprocal links ("I'll link to you if you link to me"), because Google doesn't place much importance on these either. Build links by sharing your content with other reputable sites – sharing articles and ebooks, commenting on blogs, listing your business in directories and showcasing your work on community sites.

For our clients, check your site is at least added to [www.theweblisting.com](http://www.theweblisting.com), a site designed to start you off on the path of getting higher ranked sites linking to yours. And make sure you include a text link to your website every time you contribute something to another site.

Put some of these ideas into action and you might just see your site start to climb the search engine rankings. This article is not designed to be a complete SEO guide, but it should educate you about SEO and how important it is to get it right. If you want some expert guidance on optimising your site, contact Bloomtools Sunshine Coast on 0401 574 652.

## About Bloomtools Sunshine Coast

Meet Lisa Evett, one of the Sunshine Coast's leading web design and internet marketing experts.

Lisa has 14 years experience as an online marketing specialist working across a variety of platforms including website design, search engine optimisation, online advertising, email marketing and social media promotion in Australia and overseas.



She is a Professional Google AdWords and Analytics expert. She holds a Bachelor of Business Management from the University of the Sunshine Coast and a Post-Graduate qualification in Project Management from George Washington University.

She designs functional, easy to navigate websites for clients that get found easily in Google. She also has extensive experience in business planning and strategy.

To take advantage of a free consultation, contact Bloomtools Sunshine Coast and make reference to True Local.

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