

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION FOR SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS

**get 1st page listing
when customers
search online
for businesses like
YOURS**



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When you want to get 1st page listing in the search engines when customers search online for businesses like yours, then small business SEO is where it's at...

But before I even define what small business SEO (search engine optimization) means for small businesses, here's why this information matters to business owners. If your business has any online components, for example a website or a listing in Google for business, then SEO is crucial to your business.

You can develop the biggest and most expensive website in your industry, but without web traffic (visitors) to that website, your website will essentially be useless to the business.

Secondly, it is not just traffic that you need but **targeted** visitors to your website. Having a lot of irrelevant visitors to your website is as useless as no visitors at all. Good business search engine optimization can provide relevant, consistent web traffic to your web properties – and from there into your offline business.

What is Small Business SEO?

Search engine optimization basically means optimizing content you post on the internet such that it will be easy to find by the search engines – Google, Bing, Yahoo, etc – when people search for similar content using specific keywords or search terms. The content can be website content, images, audio content such as

podcasts, videos you post to Youtube or your website, documents, etc.

Here's an example. If a prospective customer types into Google, "restaurants in Atlanta" the search engine will bring back thousands of results. This would include websites that have that search term in them, as well as restaurants in Atlanta that have listings on Google My Business, plus the paid ads, etc. Every restaurant, big and small in Atlanta wants to appear on the first page of Google for this search term, and many of the big players will have invested lots of money to be on the first page.

So, as you can see it will be very hard for a small restaurant in say Buckhead, Atlanta to appear on the first page when searchers type "restaurant in Atlanta" or "Atlanta restaurant" in the search engines. But the same restaurant stands a much higher chance of appearing on the first page when searchers type "Buckhead restaurant" in Google, assuming they have optimized their web properties for that keyword – "Buckhead restaurant" or "restaurant in Buckhead."

SEO for the small business is always a trade off. You can't afford to go for the big, high search volume keywords that would bring lots of visitors to your web properties. The better option is to target smaller relevant keywords that you have a much better chance of ranking for in the search engines.

The “big” keywords are not everything. As a small business you’d rather be on the first page for a few smaller keywords, than try to rank for bigger keywords and not be on the first page at all. Because the first page is everything! How many times have you navigated to the second page of Google’s search results? Here’s the sad fact of the day: Google is so good at being a search engine that people blindly trust Google’s ability to deliver the most relevant results on the first page.

You should therefore go for the smaller relevant keywords where you have a chance to rank on the first page of search results. For example, an accountancy business in Atlanta may not rank for the highly competitive keyword “accountant” (unless they have a lot of SEO budget and time to wait for rankings); but the same business could conceivably rank highly for the keyword “chartered accountant Atlanta”.

What are the best keywords for small business SEO?

Search engine optimisation is a complex and always-changing science, and I hesitate to advise small business owners to “do-it-yourself.” You are probably better off outsourcing this stuff, because there is such a thing as bad SEO: ineffective SEO that does not produce the desired result and that can damage the reputation and, ironically, the long-term SEO of your website or other web properties.

At the end I will give you a link to a guide to hiring a good SEO provider. But you need to understand that SEO services are quite pricey. For small business owners on a tight budget, the option for affordable small business search engine optimization is to learn as much as you can and then outsource the “techy” stuff to service providers on [Fiverr](#), where you can get micro jobs done for you for as little as \$5. Just make sure you hire only highest rated providers.

Back to keywords you should target for small business search engine optimization, a good SEO provider should research the keywords that your business could realistically rank on page one for, that also have enough search volume to be worthwhile for your business to try ranking for.

For those who may want to have a go at it themselves, one good way to come up with keywords to target is to ask your customers this question: “What would you Google to find a business like ours?” I cover this and other strategies in the Referral Marketing Course.

How to Search Engine Optimize for Your Small Business

Anytime you put up a website or spend time listing your business in services such as Google for business, this is a form of small business search engine marketing. The purpose is to have prospects that need your services or products to find you when they search online.

It begins by coming up with a list of relevant keywords that your prospects are known to use when searching for businesses like yours. One way, like I mentioned above is to ask them. Another way is to do research and find these keywords in databases kept by the major search engines. It is important to understand that many people use non-standard phrases and all kinds of abbreviations because (nobody wants to type a lot in a search bar).

So if your business or service uses short forms of words, or abbreviations, make sure you use them in your web content. Use your location a lot, use your phone contacts and email on all your web properties. If you offer emergency services, use the word "emergency" in your content, for example "24 hour emergency locksmith in Buckhead". These words and variations of them get used a lot by online searchers. Use your area code in your content. Searchers have learned that you get more targeted results in the search engine when you search using zip and area codes.

Consider this search: "emergency water removal Tampa" or "broken sewer pipe emergency repair Tampa". Now, someone whose home is drowning in water and they are looking at thousands of dollars in water damage restoration, so that every second counts; such a person will want fast service and they are looking for a company that can get to them ASAP. A better search

term will be something like “emergency water removal 33673 Tampa” or simply “emergency water removal 33673.”

This restricts their search results to emergency water removal services within just a few miles of their home, without regard about which neighborhood, which suburb, etc the company is located.

Business search engine optimization is a specialized branch of SEO and you really want to get an expert that knows their stuff. So far in this guide I have only mentioned what’s called on-page optimization. There is optimizing your website for mobile devices, and for some businesses these days it pays to use schema markup or rich snippets that are all the rage SEO-wise, etc. And then there’s link building and off-page optimization – and these are best left to people who know what they are doing.

Your best option if you are a small business looking to optimize your website for the search engines is really to concentrate on being great at your business – and outsource the SEO. I couldn’t begin to try and teach you in a simple guide such as this one a topic that takes experts years to learn and master.

As a matter of fact there are many bad so-called professional SEOs! So, below I’m giving you the link to a guide that will show you what to look for when you go out to hire an SEO consultant for your business, what questions to ask, and what to expect from their services. A good SEO provider is an asset to your business,

and your decision to hire should not be made only on the price of their services, but rather the potential return on your investment. Here's the link to "[The Small Business Owner's Guide to Hiring A SEO Provider](#)"