How to get your content to rank quickly

https://www.google.com

ALL   IMAGES

Google

Noisy Little Monkey

Google offered in: Français
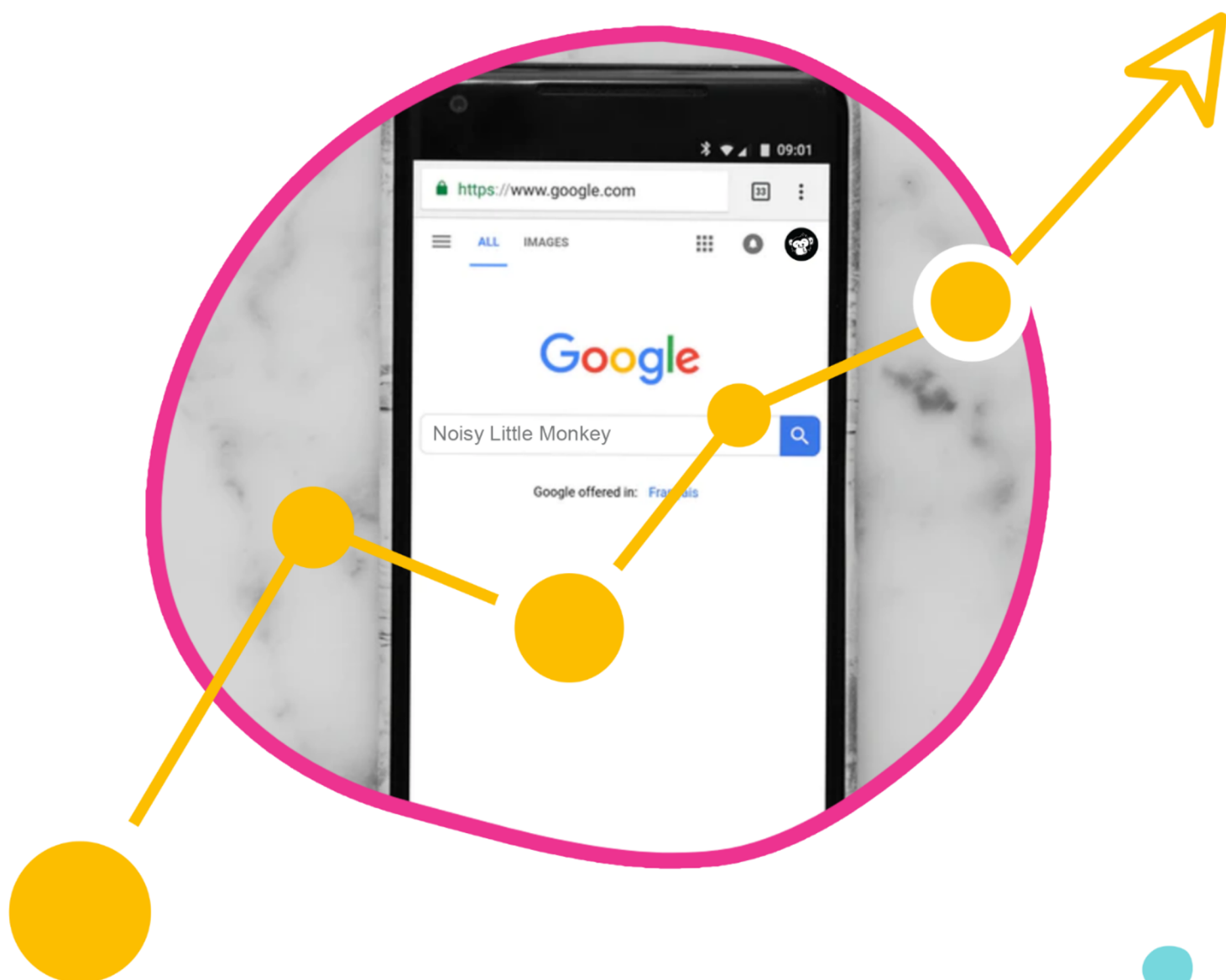
NOISY little monkey

Contents

When it comes to writing content that helps you get to the top of search engine rankings, it can feel as though you're wading through mud (or sinking). Where should you start, and what should you include?

In this guide, we break the process down into clear steps that you can apply to your content writing, so that you see results faster. You'll learn:
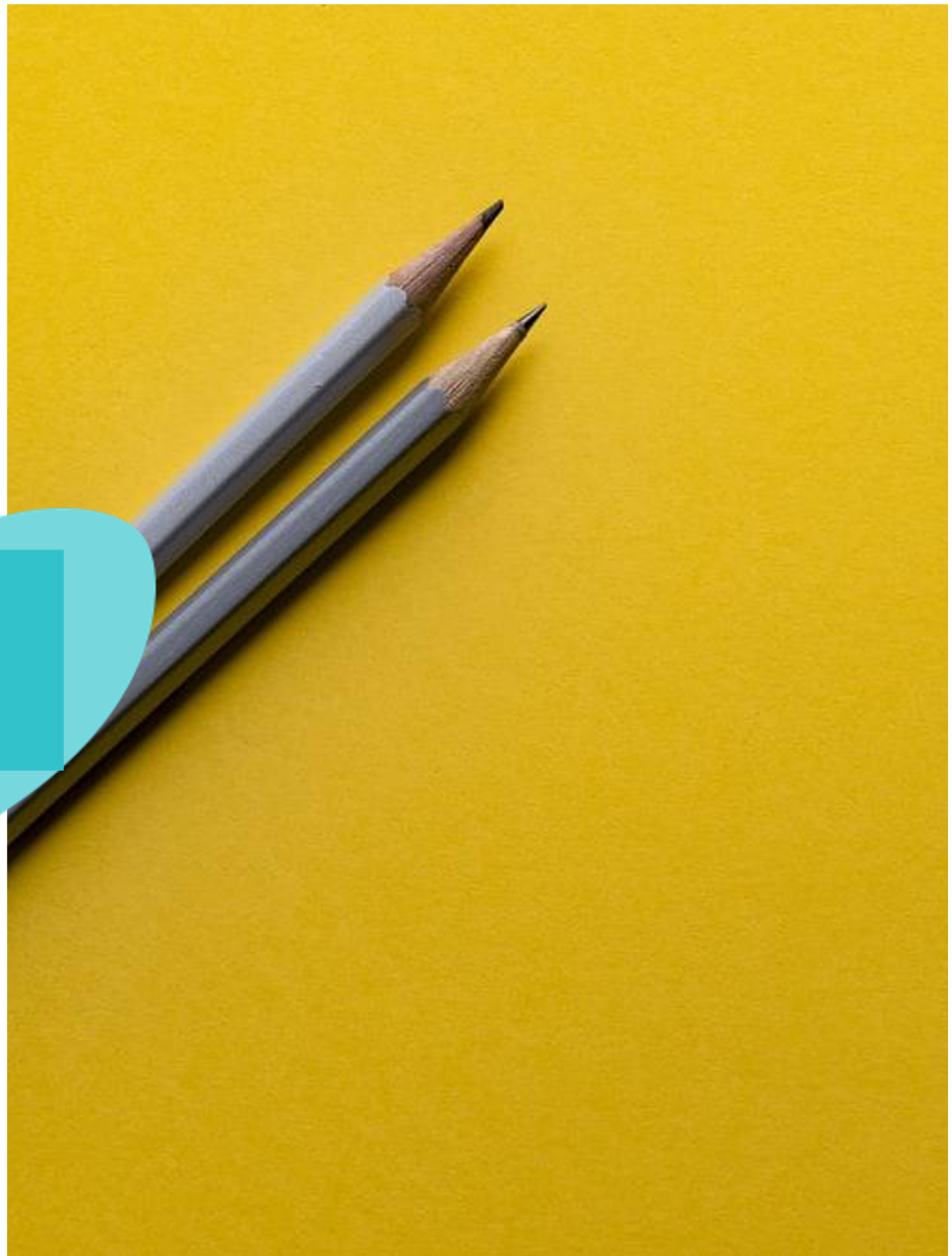
Why is content important?

Why is content important?

- Prove yourself as a **knowledge base and authority** in your industry niche

- Attract a steady stream of **fresh visitors to your website**

- **Solve the challenges that your customers face**, and lead them to buy your solution (if it's appropriate to them)

- **Generate conversions**

- **Stay up to date.** All the research you do for your article means that you'll be on top of the latest trends and developments in your sector

- Show off your **brand personality**, and your own personality too

- Create **something to share:** on social media, with clients and prospects...

- **Remain relevant** for content that is outside of your website's products or services

- **Generate backlinks**

And of course, content creation is **crucial for Search Engine Optimisation and Query Deserves Freshness**.

How do you start creating content?

How do you start creating content?

Buyer Personas

The best place to start is with your buyer personas - these are semi-fictional representations of your ideal customer based on market research and real data about your existing customers.

You'll want to identify what your **persona's pain points** and challenges might be, and from this you should be able to come up with a list of topics you can use to start informing your content.

Developing a real picture in your mind of your ideal customer will help you to define your tone of voice (TOV) as well as give you more of an understanding of who you're selling to. Ask yourself: what problems are your buyer personas experiencing? What are they trying to achieve both personally and professionally, and what challenges are in their way? What frustrations might they have with their existing products or services? What do they *need help* with?

Itching to get started on creating your own buyer personas? We've got a free template for that. Get started by downloading it here.

Search Term Research

In order to truly understand your persona's pain points, you'll want to conduct some Search Term Research (STR). Search Term Research or Keyword Research is a method that allows you to gauge what people are searching for in Google.

STR is a two way process, so the research might throw up content ideas that you hadn't thought of, and topics you thought were sure-fire might be barely represented in the search.

An effective way to gather the phrases relevant to your product or service is in a group brainstorm. Note down **all the ways** of phrasing this particular term: remember, the words *you* use to describe something may be completely different to how *your buyer persona* searches for the same product or service. Using supplier-centric terminology as opposed to customer-centric terminology is a common mistake businesses make when positioning their messaging.

Some of the tools you should use as part of your arsenal are:

- Google Keyword Planner
- SEMrush
- Answer the Public
- Google Trends
- Google autocomplete (for a rough idea of phrases)
- Uber suggest

How do you start creating content?
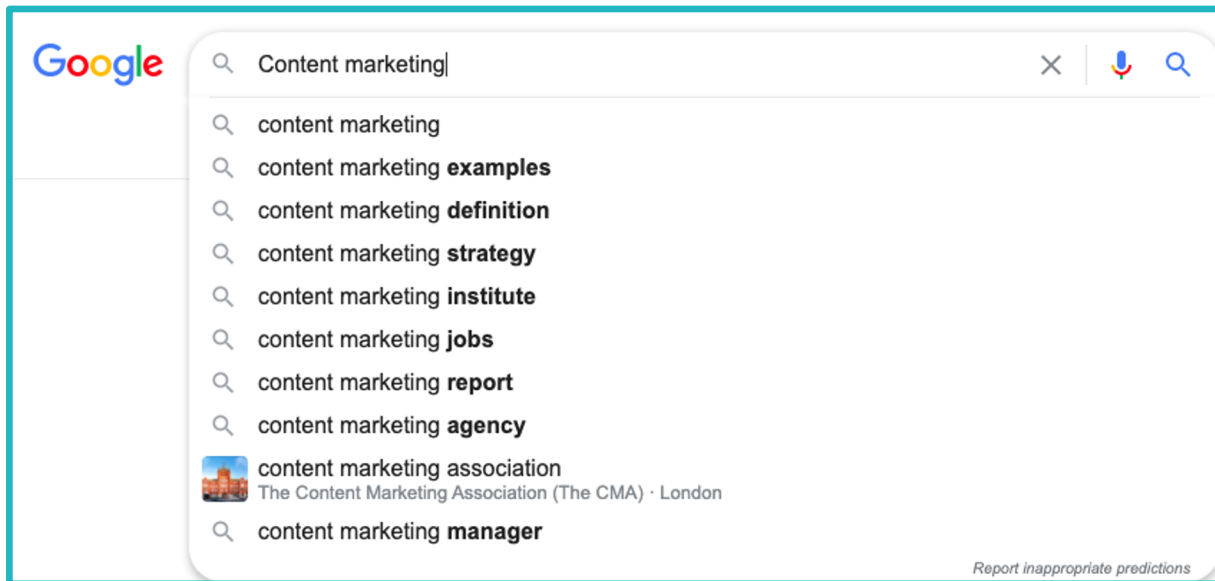
Another great way to discern searcher's intent is through the SERPs (Search Engine Results Pages) themselves. Simply Google your keywords and search phrases (in an incognito or private browsing window) and see what comes up!

Most of the time, Google will try to match the intent of searchers, and do a good job of it, too. You can gather information about what searchers *really* wanted by looking at the pages that are already ranking for the topic. If you thought your search term was an enquiry about a service, but all the results are job boards, you might be barking up the wrong tree!

How do you start creating content?

How do you actually conduct Keyword Research?

1. Look at that list of your persona's pain points and relevant topics you've made. These are the words and phrases that you want to rank for. While it's called "keyword" research, it's really more like phrases. In fact "long tail" phrases (more specific, longer phrases) tend to be easier to rank for than "head" phrases (very common, shorter phrases).

2. You also want to take a look at what pieces of content your competitors have, particularly those that enjoy a lot of visibility; you'll want to add these topic ideas to your list when conducting keyword research. (Don't worry, we'll come onto this in more detail later.)

3. Pop some quite general, unspecific terms into one of the keyword tools, and take a look at the related terms it generates.

4. Identify the terms that come closest to the subject you're working on, and put them back through the tool. The terms should be getting closer and closer to the topic you're working on.

5. You're probably getting streams and streams of phrases. Save them all in a spreadsheet and start working these down to phrases that your buyer personas might be searching for, or questions they might be asking Google.

6. You should do step 4 for all of your 'seed' words, using the tools that give you the best results. You want to try and explore almost all the ways that your personas are describing your topic.

7. From here, you should be able to cut down these streams of phrases to a concise list of queries that your personas are searching for in Google. You will end up grouping up closely related synonyms and treating them as one single topic.

8. These are the topics you want to create content about!

- NB: Answer the Public is an amazing tool that will give you pre-packaged questions to answer in blog posts or other forms of content. For a more thorough search term research process, Adwords Keyword Planner will give you thousands of search terms.

How do you start creating content?

Content campaign structure

Now you've got some topics and themes focused around your buyer persona's pain points, you'll need to think about how you'll structure these individual pieces into a campaign. Focus your content strategy around a campaign model that has a main, central topic with a downloadable content offer (such as a guide), with supporting topics that feed into and link to this download. It's all about looking at your content campaigns as a whole and how you'll schedule it into a content calendar, as well as how this will be structured on your website. Find out more about how to create a digital marketing strategy here.
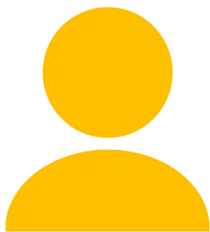
Content format

So you know what you're going to write, that's that isn't it? Not quite.

Next, you need to work out what form of content will be the best vehicle for answering your persona's question, you'll want to take into consideration the different stages of their buyer's journey.

THE BUYERS JOURNEY

Awareness stage > **Consideration stage** > **Decision stage**

Prospect is experiencing symptoms of a problem. Doing research to understand, frame and diagnose their issue.
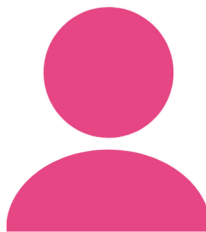
Prospect has clearly defined their problem. Actively researching all available approaches to fix their issue.

Prospect has decided on their approach. Compiling and comparing a list of vendors to fix their problem.

How do you start creating content?

Let's take the topic of SEO as an example. In **the awareness stage** of the buyer's journey, your target audience will be wanting to understand the problem they are facing so they'll likely be searching for an answer to a question such as "Why has my organic traffic gone down?".

In **the consideration stage**, they are more likely to search for comparisons such as "SEO vs PPC" so they can evaluate whether your product or service is a good fit for them.

Finally, in **the decision stage,** your target customers will be closer to a purchasing decision so content such as "Average SEO Costs in the UK" will be most valuable. Always have the buyer's journey in mind with content creation as it will inform the type of content you create (blog, webinar, comparison tables, and so on).

You'll also want to consider how your persona will be digesting your content. Will they be looking it up on the tube, for example? A whitepaper may seem like the right idea, but have you ever tried reading a PDF on your phone? It's not ideal. A podcast may therefore be a better option, or perhaps a whitepaper in html form, if podcasts aren't popular in your industry.

Making use of existing content

Before you panic about needing to write hundreds of thousands of pages of content, take a look at the resources you already have. Do you have anything that could be updated rather than being written from scratch? Whether they're already published such as old blogs, or even internal guides that you've used amongst your different teams, these could still be relevant to your audiences today.

If you're stuck for future ideas, you could also consult previous content pieces and brainstorm what you could create from it; what's next in the story? What are the next questions that someone asking this question is likely to ask?

Why not repurpose videos or webinars and transcribe them into a blog? Like this 👇

How do you start creating content?

Winning Business with Video - A Business As Unusual Webinar

Posted in Video Marketing, Posted in webinars by Jon Payne
21 Apr 20

Share   Tweet   Share   Like 4   Share

The use of video for marketing or video as a sales tool was growing fast in early 2020 and COVID-19 lockdown has seen it's use explode. You only have to scroll through LinkedIn for a few seconds to come to the conclusion that more video isn't necessarily better.

On Thursday 23rd April at 3pm (BST) 2020, Sunjay Singh, Creative Director of Life Media UK joins Jon Payne in Episode 3 of Business as Unusual - **Winning Business with Video**.

Business as Unusual

Winning Business with Video

CHAT:
What's the weather like where you are?

NOISY little monkey

When looking at your existing content, note down what could link to each other. Try to link your blog posts back to the **main pillar and landing pages** that are relevant to the content.

This helps Google to decipher the structure of your site so that you can give the most important pages on your site the highest link value.

In a less technical sense... linking to other useful pages on your website is also going to be more helpful to your audience.

How do you start creating content?

What can you learn from your previous efforts?

While you're scouring your old content for new opportunities, it's a great time to take a look at what went right, or wrong. Use reporting tools such as **Google Analytics**, or if you're a HubSpot user, the HubSpot analytic tools. You could even review **native social media** analytics such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram to see what received the greatest engagement from your audience. Use this information as part of your strategy to improve.

- What content have you got that *should* have done well, but just didn't?
- Can you **tweak or improve** it to start driving traffic?
- What about your content that is doing OK, but not great?
- What improvements could you make to give it that **extra edge**?
- Who is beating it?
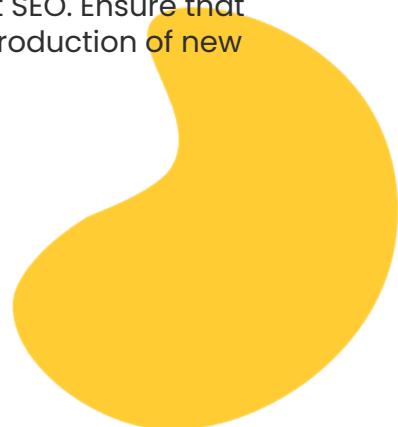- What does their content have that yours doesn't?

Maybe the information is great, but it's generic, written without a sensitivity for the particular problems of your persona in mind? Whatever issues you might uncover, unlocking the potential of your existing content is a huge win. Putting processes in place to review the performance of your content is just as important as producing new content, and it's a much more sustainable long-term strategy than expecting to nail it first time with each piece of content you produce.

You could also take a look at what is working for your competitors.
- Where do you fall short?
- Where do *they* fall short?
- Could you pick up the slack (or the rankings)?

This kind of review process is a vital and oft missed element of Content SEO. Ensure that your content calendar includes not just milestones and dates for the production of new content, but evaluation of old topics.

How do you start creating content?

What are other people saying about the topic?

So you've already taken a look at how your old content is doing in comparison to your competitors, but seeing what is being said about a topic by others in your industry is also a great way of coming up with new ideas.
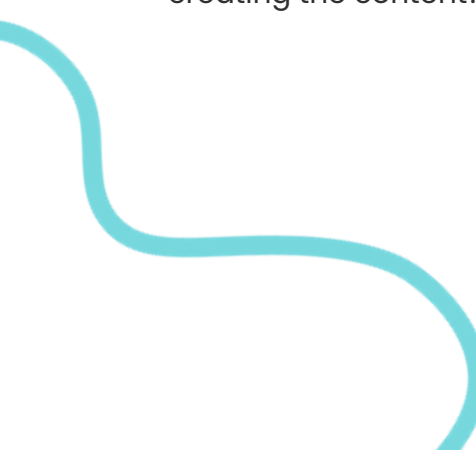
- Have you identified the **main influencers** in your industry?

- What **topics** are they talking about?

- What content is currently **in abundance** on the topic?

- Who created it?

- Do you have equivalent content?

- Does yours **answer the question** better than theirs?

- If you don't have it, how could you **do it better**?

Once you've established this, brainstorm how you could come at the topic from a different angle to them. What **value** could you add to the existing conversation? Reconcile these ideas with the topics in your content plan and make sure you're not missing any tricks.

If you're not sure where to look, Feedly and Google News are great resources to find articles on various topics and keep up to date on industry news.

Before you **go ahead and get writing**, here's just a couple of things to reflect on:

- Do the topics you've chosen have **commercial intent**? i.e. is the person reading your content likely to become a lead or even a customer? If not, is it worth your time?

- Are your **topics clearly different**? You don't want similar topics and content offerings to have to compete with each other for the same spot in rankings.

- Where are you going to link this piece of content to? You want to guide readers that have landed on your website to another useful page and increase your chances of converting them to a customer. **Create CTAs that link to relevant gated content offerings** or service pages. If you don't have something relevant to offer, why are you creating the content?

How should you optimise your content?

03

How should you optimise your content?

It's not enough to do search term research and write your content in the vague hope that it will climb to the top of the SERPs. Now you need to ensure that the research you've invested time into makes it onto the page in the correct places, and in the correct ways.

Here's how you can optimise your content so that it ranks in Google:

- Headings

- URL

- Page Title/ Title Tag

- Meta-descriptions

- Structure

- Imagery

How should you optimise your content?

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TIPS FOR A PERFECT SEO'd BLOG POST

Search Engine Optimisation is the activity that attempts to improve search engine rankings. Want to know what makes a difference? Take a look at our top tips!

1. PERSONAS

Your blog needs a purpose, writing with a persona in mind will keep you on target and help any search term research no end!

2. SEARCH TERM RESEARCH

Use Google Trends, Answer The Public, Semrush, Google Adwords or Keyword Planner to get an idea of what phrases your audience use. Find long-tail search terms or volumes and competition of individual phrases.

3. TOV

This is how you communicate the personality of your business. Is your brand formal, funny, or just plain boring? Make the way you write appropriate for your target audience but still reflective of who you are as a brand.

4. OPTIMISE EVERYTHING

The most important places search engines will look for each term relevance are: the URL, page title, H1s, image alts, the copy. Make sure your target phrase appears once in each of those locations and you'll be a shoo-in.

5. MOBILE FRIENDLINESS

Your blog needs to be readable on mobile devices. Make sure you keep your font sizes legible, evenly space your links, format your copy with headings, bullets or images and keep an eye on your word count!

6. LINKS

Links are a huge trust indicator for Google. Acquire more quality links than your competition to let Google know who's boss.

STAY AWAY FROM BUYING LINKS!

7. IMAGERY

Use engaging and relevant images. Steer clear of stock photography. You also need to optimise images by cropping or resizing them to reduce file size. Your page load time will suffer if you use tons of high resolution pics in your blog.

Don't forget to follow us @NoisyMonkey

How should you optimise your content?

Headings

When you come to write the brief for your content writer or plan the structure of your page or article yourself, work it around the search terms that you've identified. These should form a sort of skeleton and should ensure that your **H2 and H3 tags** in particular are using the keywords and questions you've highlighted from your research.
But don't obsess over these terms as you write. To make it sound as natural as possible, **write it naturally**. Don't just stuff the text with oodles of search terms. This needs to be readable, helpful, and maybe even enjoyable to your audience!

That sounds like contradictory advice, and it is a tough balancing act to get right, but well written, helpful content shouldn't have to do language gymnastics in order to accommodate the keyword phrases you've discovered. If you're writing on the topic, you're likely to have to use these phrases as a matter of course.

URL

Both your reader and search engines need to be able to understand your URL. The URL in isolation should be a good indicator of the content of the page, almost like a snapshot. Only hyphens should be used to separate words and characters, and use only lowercase letters. Keep your URL short, concise and to the point, and incorporate your desired keywords. You might have to jumble the order up a bit, but don't worry, it still counts.

How should you optimise your content?

Page Title/ Title Tag

The title tag is the HTML title of the web page (not to be confused with the H1 header). It's the clickable headline that appears in blue on Google, and the title that appears on links when you share pages on social networks.

SEO best practice suggests that they should be between 50 and 60 characters (or more specifically, 600 pixels wide). In fact, Moz suggests that if you keep your titles below 60 characters around 90% of your title should definitely show on the Google display.

It's important to note that Google may not use your specific title tag; if it doesn't quite match the search query, they will adapt it to something more relevant (if this does keep happening for specific search queries, you should consider rewriting your title tag).

This however, doesn't make your initial title tag any less important. Remember that it's the **first thing** your audience will see about your page - it needs to be unique, enticing and relevant!

www.noisylittlemonkey.com › blog › how-to-use-video... ▾

How To Use Video In Your Sales Process - Noisy Little Monkey

19 Feb 2020 - **Video** is **a** great tool for accelerating **your sales process**. In this blog, Katie shares her tips for adding **video** into **your** sales strategy.

You want a clear line of consistency through your URL, Title and H1, so that the main search term(s) used to search for your target topic are the centrepiece of each.

How should you optimise your content?

Meta-descriptions

While meta-descriptions are **not** a ranking factor, they can improve click through rate, and therefore contribute to your content's optimisation. The more people that click on your page link, the better.

To get your meta-description 'right', focus on writing a short piece of text that will make your audience want to open the web page.

- Be **descriptive**, use keywords, and demonstrate how this article will answer the question they're asking.
- Best practice dictates that they should be no more than **160-165 characters long**, as Google will truncate any content after this.
- Include **some kind of CTA** (find out more, get it now, try for free, learn more).
- As with the body of the text, always use the *active voice*, address the "you" and encourage the reader to get their answer from your page.
- Make sure you keep it **unique**; it's very easy to set a meta-description convention and copy the text from another page, but don't be tempted!
- This also might seem obvious, but make sure that it **matches the content** of the page. If the link is too tenuous, it's a sure way to increase your bounce rate, and nobody wants that!

*If you're unsure about how your Title Tag, URL or meta-description will appear in search engine results, you can plug them in to free tools like **Ryte** which will give you an indication of how it will look.*

RYTE   Products ⌄   Pricing   Partners   Resources ⌄   Company ⌄   EN ⌄   Login   Request a demo

Google Snippet Optimizer

This handy tool helps you to create snippets that make the first impression of your website special - on every device. Create and measure your snippets and see if they are short enough.

Title	Meta Description
Ryte.com - The Ryte way to your digital marketing success	Choose the Ryte way to digital marketing success and use our superior tools for monitoring, analyzing and optimizing all of your digital assets.

URL	
https://ryte.com/	

How should you optimise your content?

Structure

The structure of your content has never been more important for search engines. Put simply, the structure of your copy helps Google to *understand* what you're writing about. Think about how you like to consume something online. Would you rather scan through a HUGE block of text, or quickly find the answer in a more efficient layout?

- Using **shorter paragraphs** and bullet points is a great way to break up your text and help both your reader and Google to sift through the copy. Google *loves* structured data, such as bulleted lists and tables.
- **Cut down on waffle** and editorial fluff. If you can pose your question with the heading and deliver a specific summary of the answer in the first sentence of the paragraph, then do it!
- Use **distinguishable headers**
- Make the black and white of your page more interesting with **images, videos... even gifs** (if appropriate).
- If you do include videos, don't forget **closed captions**! Once you've done that, **add video schema.** Not only are these important for accessibility, they both provide an opportunity for google to understand the medium.
- Consider **device layouts**. Think about how your content would appear on a mobile screen and if *you* would be happy to scroll through it.
- **Cite your sources.** If you're making claims, referring to research, or surveys, or studies, make sure you make that clear. Link to the study. Not only is this the right thing to do, Google loves indications of trust and authority. So much so, they named an update about it. **Read about the E-A-T update here.**

Remember, Google's job is to make the searcher's life easier, so write your copy for the reader, not Google... it will reward you for well-written and well-formatted text, as it will actually be found and indexed.

How should you optimise your content?

Imagery

It isn't just the words and their structure that you need to optimise… images also play a huge role. Here are some things you need to think about:

- Ensure that you have a consistent **aspect ratio**
- You probably think that high quality is always better, right? **Wrong.** If the quality is too high and the image is therefore really big, it can slow the web page load time and therefore hinder usability. (You can **compress big images** using tools such as compressjpeg.com or PicMonkey).
- Before uploading your images to your CMS make sure that you've **changed the file name.** Google will crawl it for keywords, so there's no use keeping it as KI2075!
- Use eye-catching Calls-to-Action that will convert
- Ensure that all images have **Alt-text**. Read up on what makes good alt text here.

Alt-text best practice

Alt-text is the HTML attribute of an image that will appear instead of the image, if the image is unable to load. It's primarily for **accessibility reasons**, describing what the image contains for visually impaired readers. This means that first and foremost it needs to be a *description* of what the particular image contains. Yet this is also an opportunity for Google to further understand your content, as it provides more crawlable text. So, you'll want to **use keywords** where relevant.

But don't overdo it! Fragmented sentences full of keywords actually make it more difficult for Google to identify the relevance it has to the page it's on. Weave the keywords into the context of the image, such as "Sales pipeline in HubSpot" for the image below.

How should you optimise your content?

If you're struggling to find good images of your own, there are some fantastic websites where you can find royalty free images, such as Pexels and Unsplash. (Tash has written a whole blog about this here).
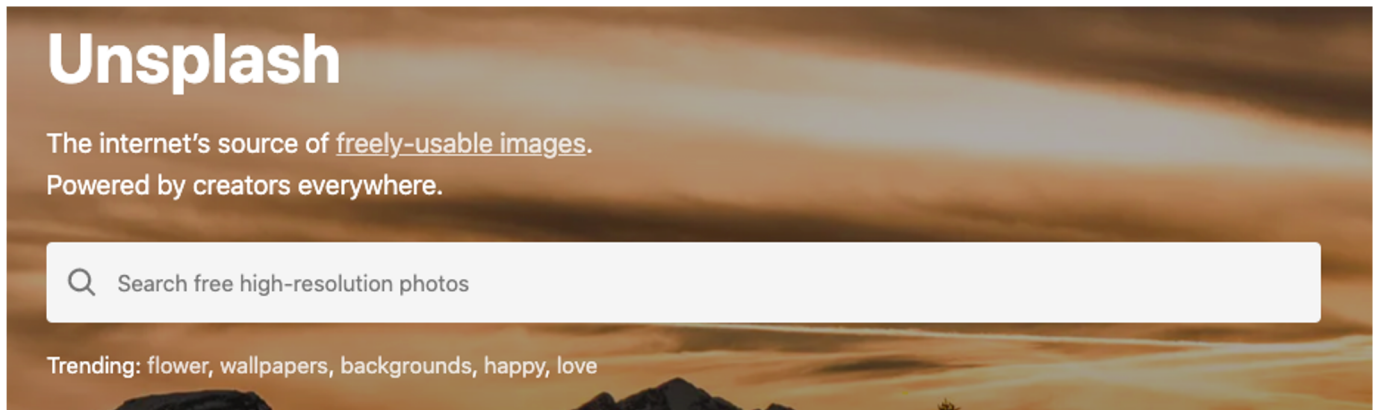
Schema markup

If you're not familiar with schema, it's code added to the HTML of your website that helps search engines to *understand* your site and provide the most useful information *about* your site.

Adding it to the HTML of pages with useful business information is therefore a great way to improve the way your site is presented in results pages.

While adding schema doesn't necessarily *directly* affect your organic search rankings, providing enhanced data in HTML form gives search engines *more* of a chance to understand your site, therefore giving it better odds than those without.

If Google's enhanced understanding of the page results in a rich snippet, you may also improve your page's click-through rate.

Read more about schema here.

Content Review

04

Content review

So you've **written your content**, in line with your wider campaign, **optimised it**, and it's **published on your site**.

But you're still not quite done yet. It's not about simply posting your content and leaving it. You'll need a **schedule** in place to come back and review the performance of your content, and make necessary amendments. Not only will this increase chances of ranking, but reviewing old content will give you ideas of what to write going forward. You can fill the gaps in knowledge on your site, and continue the conversation in other content.

So, how do you refresh your content?

Update old copy

This is a really important one. You've likely dug up some amazing content in your ideation phase, but existing content can go stale if you're not careful. One of the factors in Google's algorithms is how up-to-date it is on the topic. In a study by Botify, they demonstrate the clear correlation between content that is refreshed, how often Google crawls the content, and their rankings. Be honest, you're more likely to click on a page link if it's dated this current year, than a few years ago. So, if you've not touched a blog for a few years, it's probably not ranking so highly anymore. Why let it go to waste?

Content Review

Other tips:

- **Refresh your headline** - make sure that it's compelling and incorporates keywords.
- Change the **publication date** or refresh the post on your CMS. (Do note that it's **not** acceptable to simply just republish the content, you do need to update it, following the guidance below)
- **Link to newer and better resources** - including your own up to date pages! Think stats, events, news, and exciting infographics. The aim is to try and be as helpful as possible to your reader.
- **Remove broken links** on your website. Not sure how? You can use tools like this Broken Link Checker.
- **Update your calls-to-action**. Have you got a new shiny guide that you can link to, that's more relevant to the reader?
- Make sure you have enough **multimedia**. Whether it's an infographic, screenshot, gif, videos or simple images, add in relevant multimedia to break up the text. But don't overdo it!
- **Re-optimise for keywords**. Take a look at what you're already ranking for using tools like SEMrush's Organic Research tool or Google Keyword Planner. You can even look at monthly search volumes and traffic for each term, the competition, and also your Google ranking. What other terms could you use to optimise it further?
- Why not **repurpose** this older content too? Read it aloud for a podcast or make it into a SlideShare presentation to increase your chances of ranking for that topic.
- Make sure to **update your schema markup**!
- Finally, you need to **re-promote** the content. Using your best channels, showcase the updated content in all of its glory to help drive that traffic.

Final Takeaways

- Develop your personas
- Map their buyer's journey
- Brainstorm their pain points
- Conduct thorough search term research
- Consolidate these ideas into topics
- Audit your existing content
- Flesh out your campaign
- Produce the content
- Make sure you've optimised EVERYTHING. The fastest way to get high rankings is to optimise absolutely everything you can, and in conjunction with one another
- Publish it
- Review your content
- Finally, remember to make your content for people not engines. Don't litter it with keywords, Google is intelligent enough to understand synonyms.

Above all, don't write **crap**! It's harder than ever to get content seen. We're living through what Velocity Partners call "the content deluge": people are flooding the internet with content. The way you can stand out and rank is if you write meaningful and helpful content, and follow the information above.

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monkey