GOOGLE RANKING SECRETS

SEO

A step-by-step guide to the #1 RANK

JOE ANUCHA

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INTRODUCTION

"Big ideas in business are often very obvious, but it's very hard to maintain a firm grasp of the obvious at all times.

–Jeff Bezos of Amazon.com

PREFACE

About 10 years ago my book editor asked me if I could I write about SEO. What the heck is SEO? I thought. Before that I was writing about Google AdSense and soon realised that behind every website's success pretty much has to do with SEO. That was the start of my journey to the SEO universe. 10 years have passed by, I have made and saved up a few millions from SEO consulting and invested in other businesses for passive income (I don't know why I'm telling you this).

Fast forward to present time, I am a retired SEO consultant, try to make a new chapter in my life as a full time writer because since I have been doing SEO, I realised there's nothing makes me want to get up in the morning more than the content project. Also, it would be a big waste to let my 10 years experience in this field wash away. So here it is, my legacy for anyone who wants to learn SEO. I hope you enjoy it as much as when I wrote it.

Thank you

–Joe Anucha

WHY THIS BOOK?

There's gigantic amount of information on internet including 1,203 books on Amazon about SEO, so why this book?

I feel your pain. Too much information confuses you. This book will stop you from going nuts from information overload.

This book will basically pack everything in a nice small box and sum it all up for you as a step-by-step guide, you will know at every step of what to focus without overwhelming you with too much information. Everything is explained from the real world point of view from the big picture into the details. Brief and easy to understand.

This book is different because it was written by a guy who cares about writing. Well, I may not be the best writer but I am not writing this book because I know SEO. My job is to make sure I explain every subject in the best way I can. I just can't help it.

Convinced? May be not.

Just reading the sample of this kindle book first before you decide to buy. After all, it might not be for you.

Let's begin.

CHAPTER ONE
THE SEO MIND SET

If you build it and they will come…or not

"If you build it, they will come", a motto that a 30+ age person might recall from the movie "Field of Dreams". And for some reason this line got out into the online marketing world and made many people to perceive so.

Website is a marketing tool that needs marketing in itself. Nothing will happen unless you make it happens. I mean, nobody will come to your website unless you do something about it. And that something, can not be buying ads all the time because it's too costly. This is where the white horse SEO (Search Engine Optimisation) comes to the rescue.

SEO is the process to boost a website's ranking so that you can gain as much traffic and profit from the search engines for free. That's it with my straight face. Nothing more.

You know it, I know it. Everybody wants high ranking on Google which only SEO can provide. That's why you downloaded this book.

Or may be you have not realised the full potential of SEO. Read on.

The world is all over SEO because they know what ranking high on a search engine like Google could bring. Google is the goldmine for quality traffic, it's one of a few places in the whole online world where you find big traffic who are already interested in buying products or already wanted to find you. Where else could you find such love? They are already interested in YOU. All you need to do is SHOW UP!

SEO is by far the best long term method to drive quality traffic to your website, ideally from Google, the most popular search engine right now. Once you ranked high on Google, it's like winning a lottery. Quality traffic will keep coming your way for years to come for free!

You may have the best content, the best product or the best service in the world but all that would mean nothing if nobody can find you on search engines, and let's accept it, the search engine of today is Google.

So no, if you build it, they will definitely not come…not until you buy ads or…not buy ads and doing well in SEO.

Organic Search vs. Paid Search

One afternoon, I was in a sell pitch for a well-known hair loss company. The boss and a few employees were there. This was my first keynote slide:

The boss stopped and stared at this slide for so long, the room was so quite I could hear air conditioning. "What the hell is she looking at?" I thought…"Very strange, I have never noticed the difference before." She said. And then she turned to her employees and asked "Have you noticed the difference between these search results? And which one do you click the most?"

Everyone answered in harmony, "Below". (The organic search result)

When you google, some of you may have noticed the 2 search result types and some of you may not. So, before we go any further, we need to be cleared on what is paid and what is non-paid search result.

On top results that each has a small icon "ad" indicated. Those are ads from Google AdWords, it's called "Paid Search Result" and traffic that come from this is paid traffic.

Below results, are the non-paid result called "Organic Search Result". Since 80% of Google users are clicking on the organic result, that's where we all want to be, that's where the free traffic party happening.

Keep this in mind: SEO takes time unlike the paid ads.

Even if it takes time, SEO is still worth the effort, as I said once you ranked high, you will be around there for years to come, until you messed up your own site.

Agencies and businesses use Google AdWords ad all the time to boost traffic or boost visibility for new born websites and strategic campaigns but **traffic from organic result is what everybody wants, it's a long term investment. The investment in which you can build it yourself for free or hire other people to do it for you. It's really up to you and your budget.**

To know SEO, is to know Google

For SEO people (whoever making a living with SEO), our lives and our careers are always hanging on a string. A wobble string of change of the most popular and most advanced search engine to date, you know who – Google.

In SEO, sometimes you might have questions that nobody can answer and other times you would read from somewhere saying things that made you even more confused. Just know this: To know SEO is to know Google. (At least in the year 2000 - 2030..) In other words, the more you think like Google, the more you understand SEO.

Why Google? Other than being the most use search engine (60% market share in USA and much more in other parts of the world), if you read from authoritative SEO blogs, they all talk about Google and not much anything else. Moreover, if you rank high on Google, you are more likely to rank high on other search engines too. I read many SEO books, they all say search engines that search engines this but failed to mention this simple truth:

Google is the shit!

Your SEO goal is clear. It's to dominate Google in your market.

What Google wants is what's best for its users. Not you, not me. Not website owners. But its users.

Ultimately, what Google wants is what's best for users and what users want is to find the best answers for the query they search on Google.

Imagine Google failed to provide for this simple demand, I can guarantee you, there will be no more users for Google and no more Google in just few months and we would have to pack our bags and do SEO somewhere else like Bing or Facebook, perhaps. But that's not going to happen any time soon. Google seems to be doing better and better.

Moreover, one of the main duty of Google search team is to catch the spammers or low quality sites in order to boost visibility of high quality sites and to keep users happy with the search result. It's no surprising that Google has a website spam team dedicated to the SEO industry.

So, if you want to master SEO, now it's time to start thinking like Google, keeping up with what Google is doing, read its announcement, add search engine blog's news to your RSS reader app, and you will always be on the right mindset in understanding SEO no matter how much Google has changed and improved (just like walking around in a jungle with a compass).

Google always provide update useful knowledge on how its search engine works, all you need to do is just go read it from time to time:

https://support.google.com/webmasters/

https://support.google.com/webmasters/answer/35291

Google even has its own SEO starter guide in a PDF file for everyone which I recommend anyone to read here.

Don't believe everything Google tells you

I know I just told you that you need to think like Google but I didn't say you have to believe everything Google tells you.

For example, Google would tell you that putting your link on facebook would not help your page to rank any higher, I am sure if it was true, they are not going to tell us. If they did, Google would be full of webpages that has no value.

SEO is art and science combined together. So with the art part, you need to sometimes think outside the box to increase the chance of being a unicorn among the crowd of monkeys. You need to filter what you have heard and start implementing and experimenting for yourself to find the truth.

I like to share you part of this article: searchenginejournal.com that talk about the reason why Google is afraid to share with the world of what are the real ranking factors:

"Telling the world that links lead to better rankings in search results eventually helped create blackhat link building and Google having to crack down on link schemes. This has led to major penalties against sites suspected of buying and selling links, link exchanges, large-scale article marketing and guest posting with keyword-rich anchor text, automated link building, optimized anchor text used in press releases, low-quality directory links, etc.

Telling the world that on-site keyword optimization of web pages would lead to better rankings in search results helped create spammy on-site optimization and Google having to crack down on keyword stuffing, hidden text, etc. Telling the world that having more content on their websites would lead to better rankings in search results helped create demand for content scrapers and Google having to crack down on scraped content and automated republishing of content from one-site to another."

Now you are in the right mindset. The mindset of SEO.

Let's move on the the chapter 2 to start learning the basic of SEO.

CHAPTER TWO
HOW GOOGLE WORKS

Algorithms change but people…not so much

Search Engine uses algorithm to determine website's ranking, and Google has one called "Hummingbird". So, what is algorithm to Google?

"You want the answer, not trillion of webpages. Algorithms are computer programs that look for clues to give you back exactly what you want."

–Google

To SEOs, algorithm is basically the answer to the <u>ranking factors.</u>

Online world is not so different to the real world. Large amount of people and information are being born and being killed every second, good and bad, old and new and all the changes and differences. It's 30 trillion webpages being online so far and increasing every second. It's chaos. So for Google to keep up, they need some sort of automatic algorithms. Algorithms allow Google to keep webpages in good order (the proper ranking) at all time. The challenging part of Google algorithms for us is the changes.

To keep up with the chaos, Google algorithms need to always learning and improving. That's why it uses A.I. for this.

And when algorithm change, ranking change too. That's why we all hate SEO sometimes.

Being on the Google search result (Google's index) is like riding a rollercoaster, your page can go up and down any day. Every time Google announced a big algorithm change, webpages get killed, outranked while others get promoted to higher rank. There will be people losing their jobs while other gain money and jobs over this.

To SEOs, Google's algorithm is what we need to keep up and strictly follow as the SEO bible in order to keep the ranking health. But everybody knows, there are possibilities that even you do everything algorithm's way and still fail. I have learnt it the hard way. So, this is my lesson passing on to you..

Keep the algorithm close but keep your user closer. Because people are not going to change much. Follow your users and you will always be on the right track in understanding what algorithm is trying to achieve.

If you want to learn more about algorithms, read here:

https://www.google.com/insidesearch/howsearchworks/algorithms.html

How Google finds your site

Not ranking high on Google is no where near as bad as your site can not be found on Google. It's embarrassing! You should be ashamed! It can't be allowed! (Sorry about that, I thought I was talking to my new clients) So, before you can rank high on Google, you need to be found or get indexed first. At least when people search for your unique "brand name", you should be found at top 10 rank of Google.

So let's talk about the factors of how Google index your site shall we?

Google finds your site and include your site to its index through links: clickable link that look just like this: I love this site. Links are roads for Google to travel from site to site and webpage to webpage. Once your new site is connected with a new link from the site that was already in Google's index, Google can send the computer program called "Googlebot" to your webpages.

Googlebot is a spider bot program which crawl your site to gather information and keep them in Google's index waiting to be ranked with the ranking factors of the algorithms. (How easy Googlebot can crawl through your pages is one of the ranking factors too).
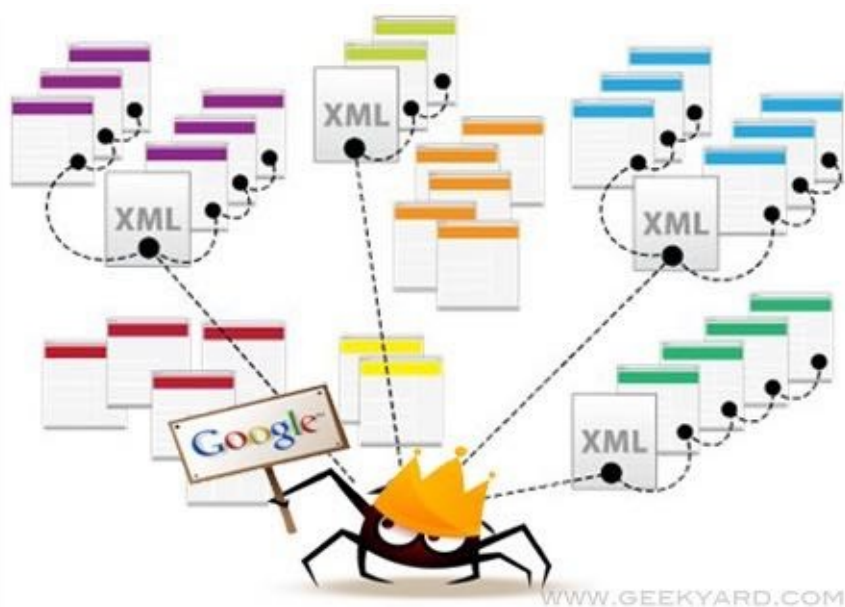
Of course, if you site was born yesterday, there is no way you can have link coming in, because no websites know your existent yet. So don't worry, there are other ways to get indexed without the mercy of links. Follow me.
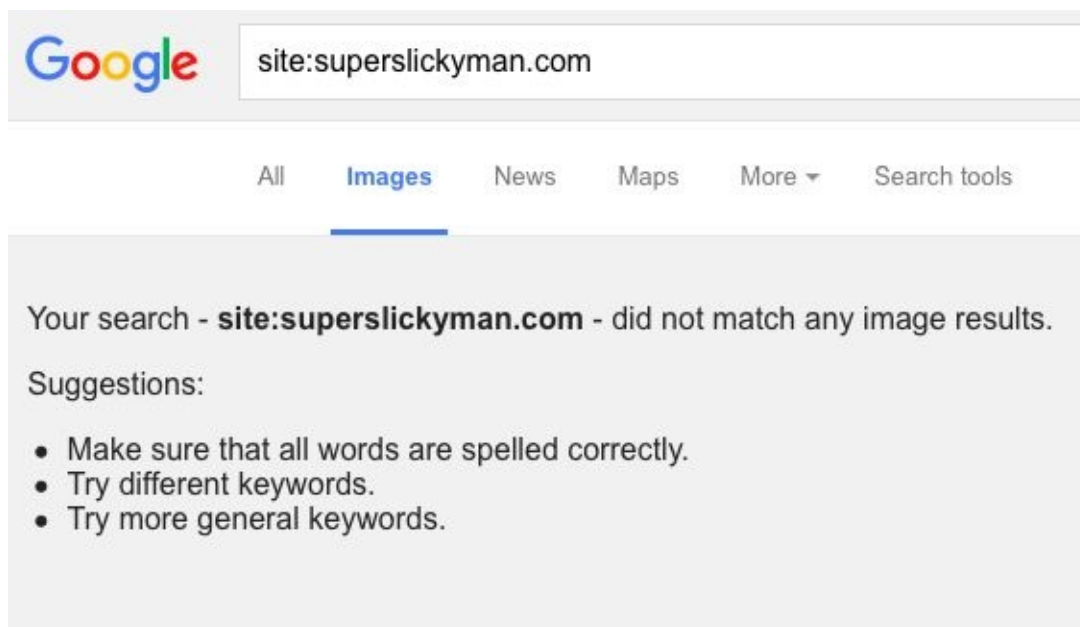
Get found on Google in 1 minute

    To be found on Google, it means you are in Google's index. There are ways you can include your business or site into Google's index quickly without putting links to other sites and pray for it to work.

    Which way depends on the type of content you have: mobile app, website and business location. Because today when you google you see difference type of search result like for apps, maps and image etc. It's not just websites anymore.
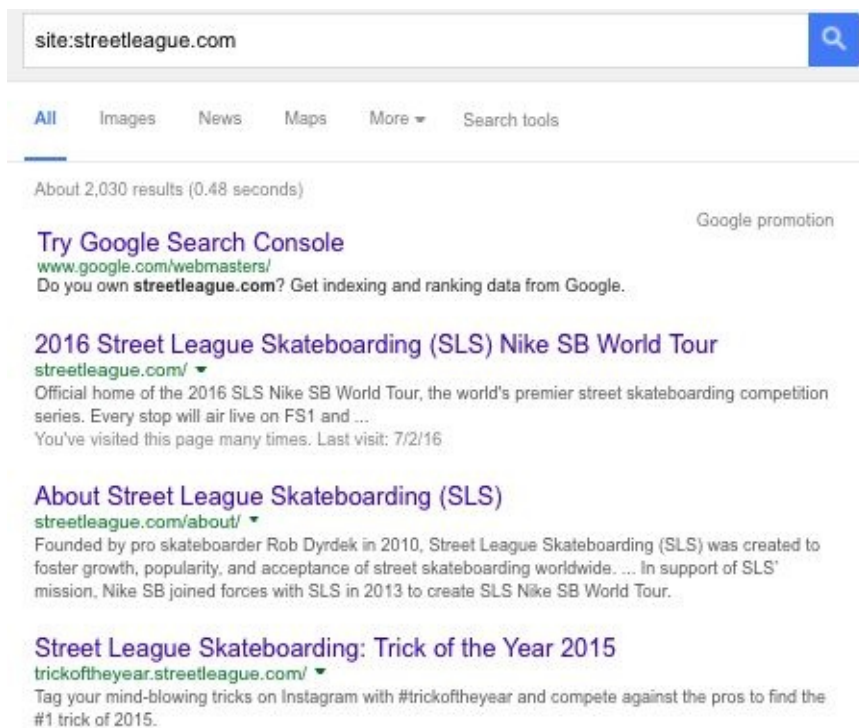
    For example, if you have just created a new website and ready for the world to find your brand on Google, just add your domain name to:

https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/submit-url?continue=/addurl

    After you submitted your site, wait for a few days, then you check the index by typing on Google: site:[your domain name] e.g. site:superslickyman.com. And you should see all your webpages appear on Google like so…

Google   site:superslickyman.com

All   **Images**   News   Maps   More ▾   Search tools

Your search - **site:superslickyman.com** - did not match any image results.

Suggestions:

- Make sure that all words are spelled correctly.
- Try different keywords.
- Try more general keywords.

    Opps…sorry about that. I forgot that this is just a made up domain name for this example so Google has no webpages that belong to this domain name in the index. But if you search with this "site:" command for other sites you should see all the webpages belong to its domain name like this:

site:streetleague.com

All | Images | News | Maps | More ▾ | Search tools

About 2,030 results (0.48 seconds)

Google promotion

Try Google Search Console
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Do you own **streetleague.com**? Get indexing and ranking data from Google.

2016 Street League Skateboarding (SLS) Nike SB World Tour
streetleague.com/ ▾
Official home of the 2016 SLS Nike SB World Tour, the world's premier street skateboarding competition series. Every stop will air live on FS1 and ...
You've visited this page many times. Last visit: 7/2/16

About Street League Skateboarding (SLS)
streetleague.com/about/ ▾
Founded by pro skateboarder Rob Dyrdek in 2010, Street League Skateboarding (SLS) was created to foster growth, popularity, and acceptance of street skateboarding worldwide. ... In support of SLS' mission, Nike SB joined forces with SLS in 2013 to create SLS Nike SB World Tour.

Street League Skateboarding: Trick of the Year 2015
trickoftheyear.streetleague.com/ ▾
Tag your mind-blowing tricks on Instagram with #trickoftheyear and compete against the pros to find the #1 trick of 2015.
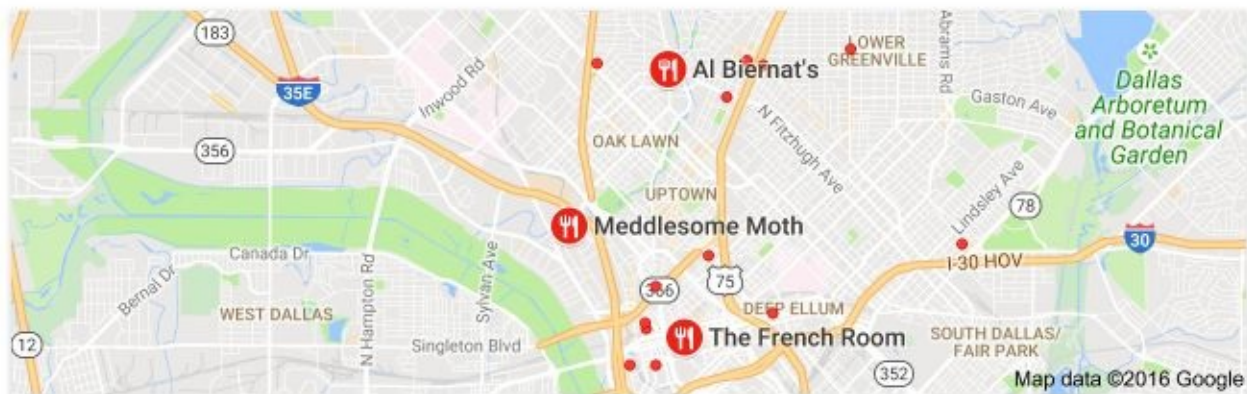
If your site's name is unique like superstickyman.com, you should be ranked within the top #5 in a week for that name because there is no competition for your brand keyword. However, if your brand have not ranked quickly, there are works to be done - read on and see content section, on-page optimisation.

For facebook fan page or youtube etc. you don't need to do this. Google can index pages under popular sites very fast and very well without your help. So, thanks but no thanks.

What if you have open a new restaurant or a store in your home town and you want to be found on Google search result and map when people search for your business's name or brand name, just submit your business information to:

https://business.google.com/add

Once you added your business information, Google will let you to pin your address on its maps, and then Google will send you a postcard with pin number to verify the address ownership and done. After that, you will be found on 1st page of Google, nice and big on the right side of search result as when search for the term like this:

And like below if you are a local store:

For other content types, see the full list here:

https://support.google.com/webmasters/answer/6259634?hl=en

Yes, for your name to be found on Google, it's as simple as that. No more guilt, no more embarrassment when people say "I can't find you on Google".

If you still can't be found on 1st page Google probably because your name isn't unique enough, you can combine your name with your product and service to make it more unique. Other than that, it's SEO work that you need to do later.

After your business or your site's brand name can be found on Google, it gets more interesting. Now, you do not just want to found with your brand name terms but you want to be found by generic terms people use in daily life to find information like "how to buy shoes" or "cheap plain ticket". Because this is where big quality traffic come from. This is

where you need to do SEO.

So without further ado, it's time to understand what makes you rank high.

CHAPTER THREE
THE RANKING FACTORS

Ranking factors overview

Our life as SEOs used to be so easy. Just 10 years ago we could just stuff keywords (search terms) all over our webpages and get to 1st page of Google.com in just a week. All of that ended when everybody did the same thing. And next thing we knew Google was full of spammy webpages. Lots of worthless piece of crap websites. I think this was like in 2005 or something. Surely no search engines with the right mind would let this go on too long because it's bad for their business. They had to do something about it.

Then the big algorithm changes came along and everybody in the SEO industry had to either step up or pack their bags and go home. If you are not interested in packing your bags, this is what you need to follow to step up in this game:

1. Create great content

2. follow the latest ranking factors

(To keep up with the SEO world even in the year 2030, you only need to google for "ranking factors [number of year]").

No matter what anybody else say about SEO, these 2 things are all there is to it: Create great content and follow the latest ranking factors. You may also have heard that there are about 200 factors that Google's algorithm use to rank a webpage with all the changes you need to keep up, don't get crossed eyes because…

Those factors come down to just 3C:

C1: Credibility, C2: Content and C3: Crawlability (obsolete)

C1 and C2 are a-must have, they can't be without each other. You may have the best content but if Google doesn't trust your site, you're doomed to failure.

As for the C3: as the years roll on and Google gets smarter at finding and gather your webpages information, it makes C3 less important every day. So today I think it's ok to say that C3 is out, obsolete! and should be replaced with the new 3rd ranking factor of Google's algorithms….

RANKBRAIN

RankBrain is the brand new ranking factor announced by Google in 2015, and it's now 3rd important ranking factor. It has much to do with Google's A.I. Or its machine learning. It can learn user's behaviour on Google to determine the best result for search term and it will keep improving itself until it can eventually take over the world….just kidding on the last part…or not. Later, I'll show you how to beat the system.

Now, let me sum it up for you the 3 most important factors in ranking high on Google to date:

C1: Credibility

C2: Content

R: RankBrain (NEW)

It used to be the 3C but now it's more like 2C + R. These 3 main factors each will have many more sub factors but don't freak out. Just do it step-by-step starting with the

information in this book first. Leave the little things for later.

Please also keep in mind that these factors are concluded from various trusted sources: Google itself and including well known SEO expert teams who have tested with proven results. I have also tried it with great results and I am here to share and sum it up for you.

However, these are not what Google tells us exactly. Because they don't tell us exactly, that's why. If they did, then no books will be needed. But rest assure that even algorithm changes big time again within these 3-4 years (2016 - 2020), to rank high on Google it would still hanging around these 3 main factors.

Next, let see each one of them.

C1: Credibility

Does Google trust your site?

If there's a reason why in the SEO world use the terms "natural" or "organic" so much, then this must be it. Because trust can only be gain naturally through time, link and word of mouth (at least it's what Google expect us to behave). Anything else that makes Google trust you is considered to be technically unnatural (that's the SEO's task to make it looks natural).

To be in the organic search result, you are supposed to be organic, remember?

What you need to know is that your website's credit is no.1 priority in gaining high ranking on Google. This is why you can still find stupid content webpage ranking high on Google that is because Google already trusted that website. It's like telling a lie to a person who trust you, he or she is going to trust you no matter what.

Credibility is what makes SEO so much challenging because it is hard to lie about it.

So let see what makes Google trust you.

C1.1 Time

First thing for the credibility factor, your website needs to get old.

6+

It's no secret, Google does not trust new websites. In the crowded online world where new sites are being born every second, only a handful continue to raise but so many just quit, there is no way Google would rank your new site a weeks or a few months. You need to prove that you are serious about building your site, and time never lies. Also, as the years roll on, the more time it takes for Google to trust new sites.

How old your site needs to be for Google to trust you? In my experience, it's usually take at least 6+ month to see some ranking (50-100). My latest client took about 8 months to see her overall rankings to #30 with all the SEO techniques applied.

How long you need to wait depends on the competitive level of your industry. The more demand the more competitors. The more competitors the harder for Google to trust you. And sorry, there is no shortcut to this factor. Time is trust and you can't buy or build trust without time.

C1.2 Backlinks

Backlink has been the most important ranking factor since Google's day one. You can have the best content but if you don't have backlink you might not survive at all. Basically, Google looks at your backlinks to determine your site's credibility.

Google treats each incoming link (backlink) as a vote. Let say, you wrote an article on your site and link some of the words to other websites like so: [stupid cartoon](#) and this mean you have voted for that page and that page then would gain a bit more trust from Google and the more link like this, the higher rank that page would gain. Likewise for your page when others link to you. Therefore, the more incoming links you have from other websites the more trust you gain from Google. But wait a minute. There's more.

Sure it used to be like the more link the better but all of that ended once again, when everybody rushed out and did the same thing (deja vu) they spam the hell out of building backlinks. They didn't care where the links came from as long as they are links e.g. Porn sites, low quality forums, free blogs anybody can create in 1 minute etc.

Then Google got tired of this kind of scam campaigns and changed algorithm big time, now all the links must be high quality: links must come from relevant content websites to yours and links must come from high credibility sites in order to gain full trust from Google.

It's no longer a number's game.

It's quality over quantity.

Today, you can have just one quality backlink and beat the shit out of a site with 1,000 of low quality backlinks. What's worse, the more bad quality backlinks you have, the more damage to your site's overall ranking.

Remember. The more backlinks you have from different domain names are better than links you have from a website.

It's called "referring domain names", which you need many of. For example, it's usually better to have 2 backlinks each coming from [engadget.com](#) and [bbc.co.th](#) than having 10 links from just one site, from [engadget.com](#). You can check your own backlinks using backlink checker tool which I talk about later [here](#).

So what to do about backlink?

Write great content and pray for the god of backlink so people would link back to your content naturally? It's very rare. That's for people who live in heaven – people are so nice to each other! Not on earth. And if it's going to happen, it would take years to gain just a few good quality links. Also, to leave things to happen naturally, aren't actually SEOs way of life. That's why SEOs need to go out and put our URLs to other sites from time to time. See how to [later in the book](#).

C1.3 Domain name's history

This one is on you pal!

Did you buy a new domain name or second hand? If new, that's good, go next but old domain name? You better check if it was panelized by Google in the pass or not. If it was, even the SEO god still can't help you. You need to go tell Google yourself that you are a new owner and promise to behave. Yes, like asking Google for forgiveness for the crime you didn't do.

Google has a blacklist of spammy websites as domain names. You can easily check by go to Google and type site:[your domain name] and see if it shows your pages, if not, your domain name might have been panelized.

But be careful!

Being panelized completely from index is very rare, site that has been panelized must of pissed Google off so badly. So your site could just be too new and Google doesn't know you yet. Do submit your site to Google and wait it out for a few weeks and check your site for technical issue first before follow this steps to regain trust from Google:

https://support.google.com/webmasters/answer/35843

Need more info? Read this:

https://www.searchenginejournal.com/10-ways-to-diagnose-a-google-penalty/10566/

And if you are curious about your domain name's info:

http://whois.domaintools.com

C2: Content

Now, let's talk about the 2nd most important ranking factor: The content. In content, I include every thing that has to do with text on your site.

Content is King!

Kindle is dead without books. Smartphone is dead without apps. PC is dead without software. iPod is dead without songs. Google is dead without websites to search for. You get the idea. Without the greatness of your content, all the technology, all the work you have put into your website could become useless. Most people spend years designing and building up their website causing time, money and tears but by the time they get around to build the content they ran out of energy, that's when everything start to fell apart. It should be the other way round.

Content must comes first and technology second.

And it's more this way now than ever. Google is getting more serious about the content everyday. In SEO, there are 2 sub factors you need to care about in making a great content with the high ranking potential:

1. Content quality

2. On-page optimisation

C2.1 Content quality

Your content must be at high quality. I know it's hard to pinpoint which is high which is low but you know it when you see one. This is easier said than done. But it is what it is. So, let me define it for you.

Your content creation must aim for the best and complete answer to that search term you want to rank for. To me that is quality content.

How would you know if your content is good enough? Comparing your content to top 10 ranks on Google and you would see it. The usefulness, complete answer, right answer, more details, longer length, more images, add videos etc. Do anything necessary to make your content as useful as it can be or at least better than your competitors who already in top 10 rank on Google.

For example, If my blog was about "buying home" and I might want to rank for the word that has search demand like "how to buy a home in Dallas". Then, before I create my article on this topic, I would google to check top 10 or 20 ranks to see what content is there. Is it incomplete? Are there questions left to be answered? Is there anything wrong with it? Not enough info? Confusing? Can you explain it better? Need more images, videos? You simply need to ask yourself: how can I add value to this?

As the previous image show, there is no webpage provide direct answer to this question, so the chance of winning is very high for me to be the best to answer this and rank high on Google.

Remember, Google already trusted those top 10-20 content to be the best answers on "how to buy a home in Dallas", so for a new face like yours to have your webpage replace one of top ranks, you have got to add more value to the topic. Make it different, more interesting, more entertaining, easier to read, make it more complete, longer length,

anything that you don't see a dozen times on Google. Do you really think Google would want its search result to be that boring by letting you repeat what everybody else already did? I don't think so.

Be the best answer and be what people want to share. Do the best you can do for each content like it is the last content you have to do on this earth, leave no doubt, no more questions behind, that's how you know you have a valuable content.

And remember, more number of content webpages doesn't mean better overall ranking.

This is also not a number game.

Content is also about quality over quantity!

C2.2 On-page optimisation

If you ever search for or sell stuff on eBay you already know on-page optimisation. It's all about relevancy of your webpage to the searchers. On eBay you can choose to filter your search by many options like lowest price, highest price, end soonest..and relevancy. Which product title and description contain the most relevant words to what the buyer is searching for will rank the highest. It's the same concept of how Google sort out the most relevant webpages.

In order for Google to approve that your webpage is worth to rank high on a search term (keyword), apart from having high quality content, it's all about relevancy.

What makes your webpage most relevant?

It's all about the keyword text on your webpage and the context of the content (high quality content).

This is the duty of on-page optimisation.

This is the easiest thing you can do in the SEO work. Even my mom knows this. You have to make your webpage relevant to the keyword that people are search for. This is about inserting keywords to your webpage (including any page that can be ranked even a facebook fan page).
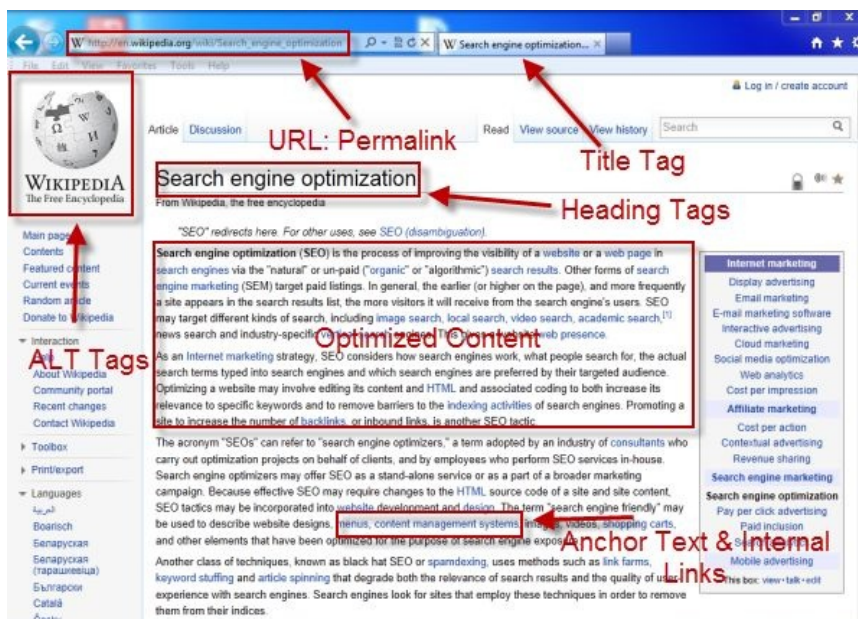
It is all about the text on your webpage's elements. Each webpage needs to show that it's aiming for specific topic with target keyword inserted. It's an SEO job to help Google understand your webpage the best you can but without trying too hard. In other words, too many keywords on a webpage would piss off Google. For the whole on-page factor, the idea is to be relevant and natural too.

R. RankBrain

On October 2015, Google announced its brand new algorithm, RankBrain. and in March 2016 Andrey Lipattsev, a Search Quality Senior Strategist at Google has confirmed that it is now Google's 3rd most important ranking factor from the content factor and credibility factor. This may be how Google keeps its promise of how they want to focus on the user and it started to pay off well too. Since then, confirmed by well known SEO experts, google search results have gotten better and better.

So how it works?

You know how it is. You google for something and click on a result and after looking at the page for 1 second, regret it, click another result, regret it, change the keyword and the groundhog day begins. Keep clicking result after result to find the right answer isn't fun. It's annoying! Why can't we just find the right answer the first time? Google feels our pain.

That is the kind of user behaviour that RankBrain is trying to learn from. RankBrain is the tool for Google to know if your content good or bad. The more behaviour like so happening on your webpage, can cause that page of yours a big drop in ranking.

Later we will learn how to [fight the system](). Stay tune.

That's it for the overview of ranking factors. Next, it's time to go to work. Starting with the step 1: finding your goal keyword to rank.

CHAPTER FOUR
STEP1: KEYWORD RESEARCH

You have only 10 competitors

A couple is walking through a forest…

Suddenly, they see a big bear in the distance, walking towards them. While, the husband is getting ready to run…"What are you doing?" the wife whispers. "Do you really think you can run faster than the bear?" "Oh no no,?" he whispers back "I just have to run faster than you.." Off he ran.

To me, this story pretty much summed it up about ranking competitors.

You don't have to compete with the total of 579,489 websites in the search results but you only have to compete with the top 10-30 ranks on Google. (If you find it too hard to outrank the top 10 just try to outrank the top 20 first or top 30 first depends on the difficulty level of the keyword, this will make being on the top 10 much easier). These top ranks are your true enemies. The rest of the sites are mosquitos, they are not important to care about since, they are so easy to beat anyway. Those top ranks are your focus they are the sites that Google trusts the most, you only need to know these top ranks' weaknesses and strengths in order to beat them. So always keep this in mind.

No matter what marketing or industry you are in, you only have 10-30 competitors to worry about on Google.

Steps to find the best keyword

To have a keyword is to have a goal. Your site or even each of your webpage must has its goal. Same as anything else, before you can work efficiently, you must have some kind of goal first. This is why keyword research is the first process of SEO.

What market you want to dominate on Google? Do you want to be the god of "selling shoes" or do you want to be the god of "how to ride a horse"? This is a lot like choosing a career. What's the one thing you want to be good at? What's the one thing you want people to turn to you when they have questions? Business wise, what's the one thing you have the most chance of success in this world? What's wrong you want to make it right? This is the kind of question you must ask first before you start SEO or start the best content blog that rank high on Google.

I will sum it up in 2 steps. All of which you can use the tool called "Keyword Planner" from Google AdWords to find that keyword. It's free.

1. Find out the search volume

This is about knowing exactly what your customers want. Suppose your site is selling training shoes, so you think you want to your site to rank #1 with the keyword "training shoes". Not so fast, because this keyword might not be what your customers literary type to search on Google or this keyword might has lower number of searches on Google than other keywords like "running shoes".

So after, you came up with the the one keyword idea. You need to find out the exact word that being searched on Google by looking at its search volume per month using Google Keyword Planner.
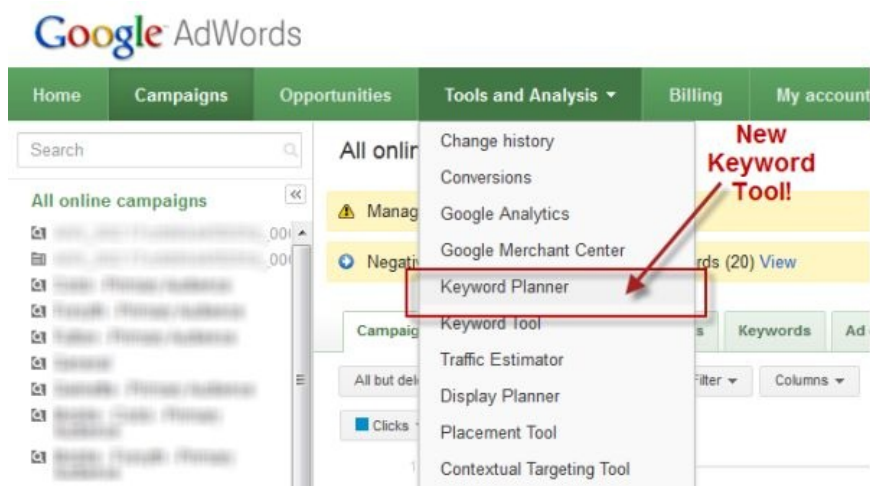
2. Find out the opportunity

Everybody wants big traffic, so always, everybody wants to rank high on the highest demand keywords right? Well – not aways.

Not, if you are new in town, you don't want to compete with a giant brand like Nike who has the best webpage for "running shoes" a decade before you. No no, you need to earn your trust in time. And no, if the highest demand keyword mean broader or shorter keywords, even though broad keywords provide big traffic but they are usually too

difficult to rank and they usually have no buying intension. **It has been proven time and time again, broad keyword is bad for business.**

Broader keyword (or shorter) = more scary competitors and less sale

For example, a super broad keyword like "iphone" definitely has more searches than a longer keyword like "iPhone 6 case". (I don't know why, most humans just has a knack for broad search I guess). But if you sell iPhone case, ranking for the high traffic "iphone" keyword isn't going to help you sell at all. Because it has no buying intension. It's too broad, it's like calling out to your friend in a big crowd of people "Hey! Hey!". What you going to get is everyone turning to you, not just your friend. It's irrelevant targeting.

So what you need to do to have the best chance of success?

2.1 Go for niche keywords (ideally 3+ words long).

2.2 Check competitors' weaknesses

(See examples later)

I also want you to read this, it's from one of the most authoritative sites in the business talking about keyword research.

"Keyword research is one of the most important, valuable, and high return activities in the search marketing field. Ranking for the right keywords can make or break your website. By researching your market's keyword demand, you can not only learn which terms and phrases to target with SEO, but also learn more about your customers as a whole.

*It's not always about getting visitors to your site, **but about getting the right kind of visitors**. The usefulness of this intelligence cannot be overstated; with keyword research you can predict shifts in demand, respond to changing market conditions, and produce the products, services, and content that web searchers are actively seeking. In the history of marketing, there has never been such a low barrier to entry in understanding the motivations of consumers in virtually any niche."*

–Moz.com

Before we proceed. Please understand that this is not the only way to find good keywords. If you google "keyword research seo" you will find many more methods, some are too difficult too complex to follow, some too basic and useless, some are very good, but this is how I did it and found great result. This will help you to see the big picture and able to apply them for further use.

In addition, there are probably about 10-20 keyword research softwares that can provide you great niches with opportunity info in 10 seconds, but without a little know-how, you would not know the value. So let's learn the manual work before buying any tools, OK? Good!

Now you understand the overview. Let's see some examples.

KR example 1: a new site

This is the first example, the most common case, a case study of how I and many SEOs do basic keyword research for a new website.

Story: I woke up one day and I decided that I am going to build a blog about "iPhone" so I want to dominate Google with something that has to do with "iPhone". I also realised that ranking for the word "iPhone" isn't going to be possible, since there are many scary competitors like Apple.com and many big authority blogs. I have to find other niches instead.

Step 1: I enter the seed keyword "iPhone" in to Google Keyword Planner. I found many more keywords relate to it. Each niche keyword with 3+ words and has at least 10,000 avg. searches per month, I add them to my list. Sometimes I even peek at my competitor sites and see what keywords they optimise for and put them into Keyword Planner to know more about them.

In Google Keyword Planner, you would see that there's the **Competiion** column next to the **avg. Monthly Searches** (search volume), this to show you how competitive in the paid search result, not organic. If it says "High" it means there are high number of people paying adwords for this keyword. For SEO opportunity, I would just ignore this and manual check myself on Google.

Be careful! Traffic gain is only half of search volume!

Keep in mind that the niche keyword's search volume is relative to the industry demand. In a big demand industry like "iPhone", surely, there are many keywords with 10,000 search volume. But for lower demand industry, each niche could go as low as 30 searches per month, totally not worth doing SEO at all. So how to know what is the search volume you want?

Think about this, you are ranked #1 on Google on the keyword with 10,000 searches

per month, what you gain would be just 50% or less to that number.   Basically, 10,000 searches would yield about 5,000 visits per month for you if you ranked #1. Why so low? Because ranking #1 doesn't mean everyone will click on it. [Later about that too](#).

Step 2: Once I have my list, l starting checking each keyword's opportunity. Taking "iPhone 7 case" and google it to see what are the top 10-30 ranks. What kind of enemies I am up against?

For the enemies checking, these are what I watch out for:

Site credibility: are all top 10 ranks are all big brands like apple.com or amazon.com? If yes, I skip this keyword for now and do the easier ones first.

Meta tags: do all those sites add this exact keywords into their meta tags? If yes, I skip this keyword for now. Because it means everyone is doing SEO for this keyword already.

Content: do you find any of your competitor's content are well written with nothing to add value to? If yes, I skip this keyword until I can think of something to add value to.

If "no" is the answer to all above, then I would build a blog around that niche keyword. I will aiming to do better than those that failed to provide the best answers to the most obvious questions in my industry.

If all you see are tough competitors on top ranks on Google, then start your blog with the easiest keywords you can find first. Start with just one niche keyword, build your content around it. Create 10-50 articles around that one niche. Just one niche keyword at first until your site starting to ranked in top 100. From then on, it will be easier to start doing the more competitive keywords because once you are in top 100, it means Google is starting to showing the trust to your site.

In other words, for a new site or a new content campaign, just aim for the niche that you have the most chance of winning in short time first. Leave your ego at home!

KR example 2: an old site

What if you already started a website long time ago with 100s of articles already written and want to do SEO. What then? What you need to do in the keyword research process?

I would suggest you to find the webpages that already rank on Google and improve upon those webpages first. What you need to do is the find out which webpages are already ranking on Google. Ideally, you want to gather all the webpages that already rank around #11-50 ranks.

But first you need to know your keywords. So go back to example one and get your keyword list first. Then, you match the keywords you found from the example one to those webpages. Let's see a case study.

Story: I decided that enough is enough! I have a website contains 100s of articles about dog but its ranking suck so bad on Google. I usually rank around 5th to 10th page of Google for all my pages. I want them to rank better.

Step 1: I did some keyword research (as in example 1) and found 50 keywords that look relevant to my webpage articles. All of them have at least 5,000 searches per month according to Google Keyword Planner.

Step 2: I added all the target keywords I gathered from Google Keyword Planner to my rank checker tool to see if any of my webpages are on what rank on Google. (I will talk about the tools here).

Out of all the 50 keywords, the rank checker tool shows me that only 10 keywords my webpages are already in top 100 rank. They are not rank high but they rank and that's good enough for now.

Now you know that a keyword "how to feed a dog" is the keyword Google think your webpage titled "How I hate feeding my dog sometimes" should be ranking for. And this page is ranked #73 on Google for that keyword.

Now, you have matched the keyword "how to feed a dog" to the webpage "How I hate feeding my dog sometimes". **Now, this webpage has purpose. The purpose of improving the ranking for the keyword "how to feed a dog" on Google to the highest possible.**

Step 3: I do SEO: build links, do on-page optimise and improve this webpage content quality and watch the ranking progress to the 1st page of Google and higher.

Repeat the steps for each of the webpage. Done.

You need to do this for all your webpages. Create an excel and match each webpage and its url with its keyword so each page has a goal. This is called "keyword mapping" process.

And you keep doing that for all the pages that you need to improve in ranking, they are the webpages already ranked on the top 20 to 100 ranks.

Please note that, this method will let you know 2 things:

1. What keyword Google thinks your webpage should be ranking for.

2. Which webpages of yours has the highest potential in going top 10 rank real soon. (If your site is new you will not rank at all in generic keywords, you also need time). You don't want to start build ranking from webpages that has no rank at all. You want to gain trust little by little starting with the easiest ones first and the harder later. This way you have more chance of success.

In Google ranking, it's always easier to improve what you already have than start new.

However, Google might be ranking some of your webpages for the wrong keywords, this is for you to fix later. Fix that webpage with the keyword you want it to rank instead with on-page optimisation: improve the webpage's content around the right keyword, remove the wrong keyword from the page and add the right one to it….you know once you read in the "Content" section next.

Now let see the last example for keyword research.

KR example 3: a shoe store

What if you already have an online store, selling high demand products and you have no choice but to rank for the highly competitive keywords. What then? Your answer: niche keywords (long tail keywords).

Story: You have an online store selling "running shoes", your traffic from Google is very low and you know it's not possible to compete the rank with the big brands like Nike, Adidas etc. In order to cheat your way to the rank #5 to #1 you want to go to different roads from the big brands, the smaller roads that big brands have not optimised for.

You must pick one of your product categories and build Google traffic from. Just one for now. Which category is the easiest to do? Let's find out.

Step 1: From Google Keyword Planner, you have entered the seed keyword "running shoes". And since you are in the US, you chose your targeting location as 'United States'. Now, as you are already selling women shoes, you are very happy to see a relevant niche keyword like "women running shoes" with very high 200,000 searches per month. See this image:

Since the more niches and the longer the words the less competitive, don't settle just yet. You are going to need more niches in case it is still very competitive on Google, so dig deeper by enter the niche you found back into the Keyword Planner again in the next step.

Step 2: Start over again. From Google Keyword Planner, you entered "women running shoes" with USA targeting already set. Now, you have found synonym but even more niche with longer words like "running shoes for women" with 20k searches and "best running shoes for women" with 18k searches.

These might be niche enough to do, but to make sure that it's not too competitive you go check what are your competitors on Google with these niche keywords.

Step 3: You google the keyword "running shoes for women" you have found that the top 10 ranks are still big brands and all of them optimised fully for this keyword. However, "best running shoes for women" you have more chance.

You settled on the keyword "best running shoes for women" to build content around this. See content section.

You can also apply this method to your new product or content you might want to have in the future to expand customer base too.

Repeat step 2 or use below method to dig even deeper into a niche.

What if niches you found all still have high and scary competitors? You need to find more niches, by looking for alternative ways to find them like: Google related search, Google autofill search, try keyword software like WordStream etc.

Is Keyword Research Dying?

In order to find the keyword to dominate on Google, you have to find the keyword that has the right balance between the search volume and the amount + strength of competitors and…that's it? Most of the time yes and there's something else too.

As Google getting more advanced in understanding context and language and stopped showing us the niche keywords people search for, more and more you will start to hear people saying that keyword research might be dying, like this article.

Google hates SEO. They don't want us to control their search result. They want it to be unpredictable so we would buy more ads. That's why Google Keyword Planner and Google Analytics don't show us everything like they used to. Therefore, it's harder everyday to know what keyword people are searching on Google. What you see from the Keyword Planner tools are only about 40% of what people actually searching.

Consequently, this forces all of us to be more creative in building content. Very soon, it will be more like content marketing than keyword research. **So, my advice to you is: do keyword research to have a clear and a worthy goal (possible to rank high and have potential in bringing quality traffic), and keep create great content to your customers.**

And remember, before using tools, use your own imagination, picture in your head of what content your customer's need that all your competitors failed to provide.

That's it for keyword research. If you are confused, I suggest you start doing it right away, you should have more understanding a long the way.

Now you have the keywords. You know what you want in life.

Next is time to optimise your site with those keywords in the Step 2 of the SEO process.

CHAPTER FIVE
STEP2: CONTENT & ON-PAGE

Content that Google loves so much

Now, you have your niche keywords ready to do some serious SEO work. From creating great content to inserting keywords into your webpage. Let's start with the content first.

When SEOs saying about content, they most likely talking about text articles. You may plan to have image and video gallery on your site but to do well on Google without being famous (like the oatmeal.com who is known by drawing funny cartoon), you need text articles.

So, first thing you need to do in winning Google's heart is adding new quality articles to your site. You should think about content even before your site was born. For many of my clients who started a new site, I always suggest them to plan ahead the content before they even start designing the website. Because once you launch your site it is like open a restaurant, you can't crap out half way ran out of food. You need a big supply of content.

So here you go, these are the qualities in an article you should aim for, in order to please your users and for Google to reward you well in the search result:

1. 1,000+ words

Since 2016, the length of an article becomes very important to rank high on Google. If you have been googled and read articles from top 30 ranks you should noticed, it's very rare to see thin articles (like less than 500 words) ranking high these days. So, length matters. Have your users scroll down like there's no tomorrow. Longer article, add more sub headers (H2) with more useful information is always better but don't make it long just the sake of it. How long exactly you ask? As I told you, look at the top ranks, they are your competitors, just check for their weaknesses. This is one of them. If all the top 10 ranks with high quality content have 1,000 words, your job is to do 1,500 words or more.

This is an article post that has minimum length. (Do this in an ordinary day)

This is an article post that has long length. (Do this when you feel competitive)

2. Be original

It's no secret that Google hates duplicate content. Copying content from other sites is bad for ranking. It also can make Google look bad to its users. Your content must be original and unique, you must write your own or hire your own content writer. Do not even copy a line or two from other sites exactly (except for quotes). Wait there's more. Not being a duplicator is one thing, and not writing with your voice is another thing. Having your own voice is the simplest way to be original. Be yourself! Add you own opinions, your own thoughts, your own stories from time to time, be human, don't be a robot and users will love you for it. When users love you, Google will also love you.

3. Great headline

Although Google doesn't say this is needed but for modern day SEOs, this is how we indirectly please the algorithm "RankBrain". You need to make sure that yours headlines are better than all the top ranks. Create question marks in user's head, make them curious or write controversial title, whatever to make it the most interesting. Go study about how to make great headline.

4. Be fresh

SEO websites need oxygen just like us and its oxygen is fresh content. If you stop feeding it with new content, it will slowly die out on Google. I used to have so many blogs left to die like that. Lost passion. Bored. No new content added for months, then all the ranks were dropping like flies. Google needs fresh content. It makes Google look good in search result. Google gives credit to websites that update more regularly. How often you should update your content? Just look at the most popular sites in your industry and you check their content dates. I say, usually, a decent blog would update at least 1-3 new posts every day. But for a news blog, it should do even more. You can't just update your blog once a week and expect Google to give your site great ranking. Google is a tough space. If you don't do it, there will always be other sites who update more, ready to replace you any day.

5. Be the best answer

People say this and that about creating quality content but nobody ever mentioned that quality content most of the time is no different to having the best answer. Looking from user's perspective, when searching on Google, all they need is the best answer. Only the best answer will have users stop searching. Once you have your keyword, look at your top rank competitors and ask, is your content the best result out of them all? If not, what are you going to do about it? What do they lack? What points do they miss? Does it need more pictures to explain or a video? More length? More Sub headers? Just be the god damn best answer you can be in anyway you can in every content, be what suppose to rank high and Google will reward you much easier.

In addition, the line between great content to users and great content to Google is getting thinner every day. If you are curious to know how to please your user in creating great content, read more here **kissmatrics**. And if you love writing great content and want to keep improving? This is the **blog to read**.

Google also has a short guide on creating great content **here**.

Once you have great content, now it's time to have Google understand it with on-page optimisation. Next!

How to do on-page optimisation

Quality content is not enough.

Just 5-6 years ago, quality of content was not even included in the main ranking factors. Google recommended so but it couldn't differentiate between good and bad content. You could just write crap and rank high if your site has good backlinks. Today, Google is getting smarter, it spots a great content from a mile away or…does it?

It doesn't always.

Google may be smarter but not that smart (yet). Sometimes, it's down right stupid. Even with the brand new A.I., it still ranks so many keywords for the wrong pages. It still having problem understanding webpage's context and website's credibility can blind Google from the truth. That's why we still see worse answers being ranked higher than the best answers. So, just write quality content alone and pray, could result in low ranking or worst, ranking for the wrong page. You need to make your webpage more relevant.

That's where on-page optimisation comes in.

On-page is about making your webpages more relevant to their target keywords. It's about helping Google understands your webpage more, so it can rank you better. This can be easily done by inserting your target keywords into the 4 elements of your webpage:

1. Domain name and URL

2. Header or headline (H1 including sub headers H2, H3..)

3. Meta tags

4. Body text

I know there are more elements in a webpage but only these 4 are what Google cares about. Google looks at these 4 elements to learn what your page is all about. Your job as the on-page optimisation implementer, you must make sure to insert your aiming keyword into each element and make them look as natural as you can.

You don't need to know HTML to do this, but it would help a lot if you did. HTML is also easier than you think. But if you are not planning to lose more hair right now, you can stick with the SEO work and create a keyword mapping excel fie and send it to your web developer to do it for you.

As for keyword mapping file, you can use mine if you want:

[Download it here](#)

(There are many sheets in this file, please checkout each one)

What the hell is Google Snippet?

Before we get into the on-page optimisation in each element, I feel you need to know about Google snippet first. What's snippet anyway? Well..you have seen it every day, you just don't know it. This is what it looks like:
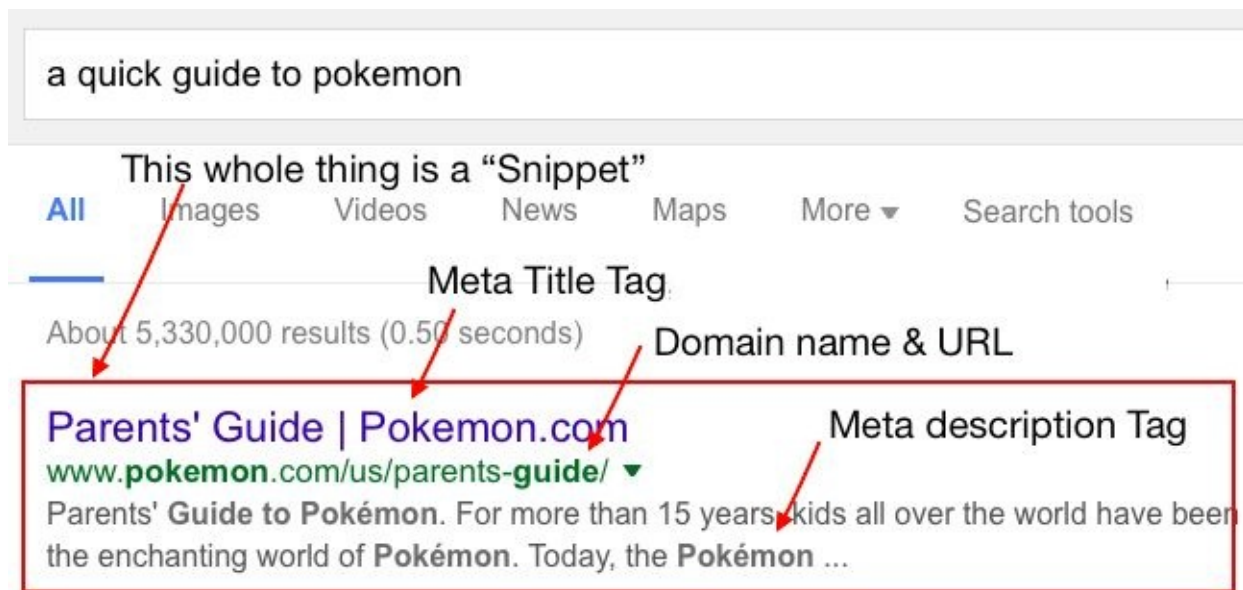
Today more than ever, more clicks on Google equal higher rank and a snippet is responsible for this. Apart from being ranked #1 - #10, what your snippet looks like, directly affect the number of clicks. (Ranking #1 affect number of clicks more than #2 - #10)

People click more on a search result (a snippet) and consider it to be the best answer for them because they see 2 things in a snippet:

1. Interesting context

2. Keywords (they've just googled)

Which lead users to best answer content. If you don't have the best answer, user will go back and google again. If a lot of this happened on a snippet, it will send a signal to Google that that snippet doesn't deserve the high rank on Google.

A snippet combines with: Meta Title Tag, Meta description Tag and URL. These are the 3 out of the 4 elements that you have to craft to make it look good as a snippet, not just inserting keywords for the sake of relevancy alone.

To make a snippet look good, It's about engaging sentences.

It's not just stuffing a bunch of keywords together to pull as many targets as possible. Ideally, your snippet has to look focus and be better than all the top 10 ranks on Google. It's the same as saying, who has the best snippet wins. Even rank #3 could win rank #1 with better snippet.

You snippet must focus on a certain answer, do not bombard your snippet with too

many topics, nobody can be relevant to everything!

To make a snippet clicked, is also about using every space sufficiently.

If you have tried to sell your secondhand stuff online and tried to craft the title for it on eBay or classified sites or you have wrote your adwords text ad before, you should already familiar with this. It's every similar.

I'll talk more about this in the meta tag section.

Next, let see how to do on-page optimisation for each element.

On-page1: Domain name and URL

God I miss those days when, if I wanted to rank at top 10 on Google in a few weeks for a keyword "mac notebooks" I would just buy a brand new domain name with that name e.g. macnotebooks.net if not available I would buy .org etc. (this called exact match domain name) or make it slightly different adding my brand name behind it like macnotebooksbobo.com etc. And the top rank was mine. Not anymore. You can still use this technique in low competitive markets and in non-us countries to win over your competitors by a nose. However, in competitive markets, this can send signal to Google saying you are a spammer.

If you asked me today: do I need to have keyword in my domain name to do well on Google? No, you don't. It's not important any more. What's more important is your site credibility and your brand. So, for domain name, think of your brand first than SEO second.

And if you asked me: what domain name extension to use? .com or .tv or etc. I would say once again: look at Google's top ranks and you should see that most of them are .com. However, other extensions are becoming more popular these days, so keep your eyes open. Also, keep in mind that, .com is still the most rememberable and the most used for big brands, so stick to .com if you can. To Google, domain name and its extension are becoming less and less important.

However, don't forget that your domain name is another thing that get display on your snippet and every snippet of your site. **Just forget the SEO and do whatever that makes your domain name look good and appropriate for your brand.**

For example, if you name your domain name as, www.seoexpertxxx.tv it would surely get lower click from your snippet than www.seoexpertdallas.com. The first one looks like a porn tv site that's why!

What still works great for on-page SEO though is the URL.

URL is the most important element in on-page ranking factors.

It's always a great feeling to have another element where I can insert more keywords to help Google understands my page even more, and URL is one of them. Each webpage has its own URL like so www.xxxx.com/urllookslikethis. A URL is like an address for each of your webpage. URLs must be SEO friendly (readable human language), you don't want a dynamic url like /?x8dsub=.

If you don't understand it, also Google doesn't understand it.

The best combination in a URL is:

1. Short

2. Contain keywords

If you webpage's targeting a keyword "mac notebooks" you must insert this keyword into your URL, no excuses. No matter of what your header might be, URL must have a target keyword in it.

About stop words

The length of URL is very important, do not use too long URLs because for one, they send spammy signal to Google and two, people rather click on a snippet that has nice and neat URL. Use your content header for the URL is ok too, as long as your header isn't too long. If your header is too long (10 words or more), you must filter out all "stop words" first before making it a URL. Stop words like: A, And, The, How, They etc. (See the full list on this site)

Google doesn't read "stop words".

So you don't need them in your URL. For example:

Header: How to stop smoking in 10 days

URL: /stop-smoking-10days

The shorter URL the better because it will looks nice and neat in a snippet. Google also limits space it display your text in a snippet, you want your target keyword to appear early on the left (keyword prominent factor) to have higher clicks.

To see more examples: google for authority SEO sites and see what most of them are doing for the URLs.

Don't forget that you might also have URLs with sub directories for your content categories. For example, www.xxx.com/category1/mycontent. So, adding exact target keyword to for your category names is also a good idea too. For example,

www.xxx.com/womenshoes/women-running-shoes01

Hyphen or Underscore?

Always use lowercase and hyphen. Use hyphen to separate your words in keywords to make it easier for Google to understand your keyword. Hyphen is the only thing that Google knows as a word separator. So do not use underscore like how_to_buy_women_shoes.

Be careful for foreign sites and store.

For foreign content sites, if your content is in Chinese, use Chinese in URLs, don't use english. Because using your user's language will drive more clicks. Google knows every language now, don't worry.

Also, If your whole site that contains about 500 webpages and already doing well in SEO without friendly URLs, and you want to modify them. Do not change all at once in one day or you will lose all your ranks and might not never recover again, and the all organic traffic will go down with it. If you sell stuff online, you could go bankrupt in a day. I would advise you to change a few per day until it's done and don't forget to do the 301 redirection for each one so you don't lose your ranking and your organic traffic. This is very important, I have learnt this the hard way myself, so I'm telling you not to do the same mistake.

Sub domain name vs. sub directory

If you are planning to create a micro site from your mothership site and thinking to use sub domain, think again. A sub domain (e.g. subdomain.mymothersite.com) will be a new site for Google, you have to start the whole credit building all over gain. But for sub

directory, Google will treat it as one of you old site. Anyway, before you do this. Do some research about it first. Because the difference could impact a lot of its ranking.

On-page2: Header or headline (H1)

Header or headline is the same as content title. Technically, it should be your H1 tag on your webpage, the first header on a page. Looks like this:

This is another important page element that Google reads to see what your webpage is about. People get confused a lot between the header and the meta title tag. Simply put, Header is for users and meta title tag is for Google. What usually get displayed on the snippet's title is your meta title tag and not this content header.

For header you can be as creative as you want in writing your headline, to make it interesting or mysterious without caring about SEO factors (inserting target keywords). Then, you use title tag and URL as your tools to make Google understand your content more.

For example:

Headline: "Five steps to report marketing results like a boss"

Title Tag: "5 steps to report <u>online</u> marketing results like a boss <u>by Joe Anucha</u>"

URL: "reporting-<u>online</u>-marketing-results"

 As you can see the variations above, the headline looks like it doesn't give a damn about Google but only its users. It's good. Looks very natural. But for title I added the words "by Joe Anucha" because I want the world to know and see in a snippet that I wrote this! No joke, many brands do this.

Also I inserted the word "online" because "online market" is the keyword I want to rank for this page. Yes I did my keyword research. I also want Google to understand this content is about "online marketing" not just any marketing.

Now, you should see what's the game here. SEO expert is always trying to make each of the webpage element serving its purpose. We use header to persuade users and other elements to be relevant for Google and try not to look robotic.

For a new blog who constantly keep writing new posts, soon your home page will fill with lots of headers, so think of your site like a newspaper cover full of headlines, make them hook! To come up with a great headline, keep the the following in mind:

1. Always use H1 tag

2. Think of users first and ask these questions:

Be useful: Does this title look useful enough? Make yourself useful!

Be ultra-specific: Is this title too broad? Don't promise the world. Go niche!

Be unique: Does this title stand out from the top ranks? Be yourself! Have a voice!

Learn to craft you header often, and soon you will be able to master it every time without even thinking about it.

What about H2, H3..?

For CMS like: Blogger, Joomla, Wordpress etc, your header is already H1. So you don't need to do anything but only the sub headers that you need to choose H2 and H3 yourself like this image:
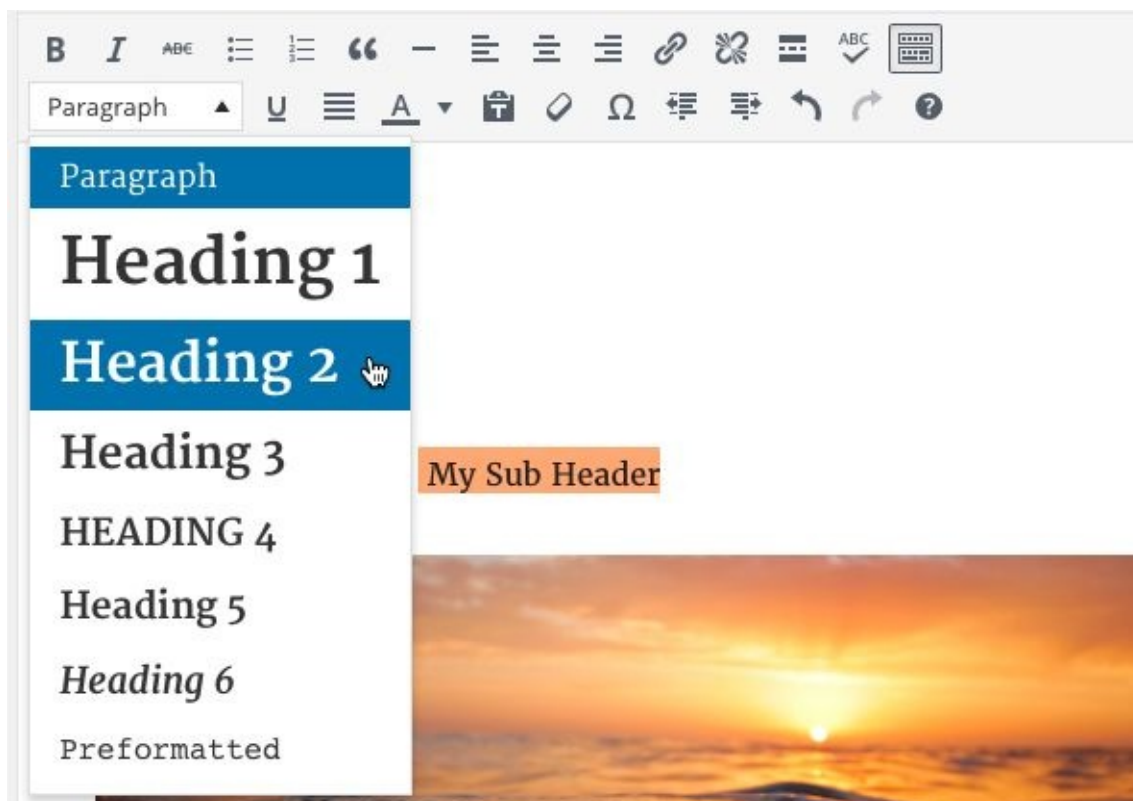
Longer article is always rank better these days but longer article without sub headers can be confusing to your users and also Google. So start using more sub headers to divide your stories well and use H2, H3 tags properly. I rather stab my eye with a pencil than read a 1,000+ words article without sub headers.

Most webpage with an article usually just has one H1 and a few H2s as sub headers and that's it. You don't need to go deep into the H3 and H4 sub headers unless your content really needs to. Don't think SEO, just think READER.

Also, don't forget, as I have been saying…check your top rank enemies. See what they do and do it better.

Don't forget to insert a keyword to every header or sub header if you can. There are also good tips about header on this site [here](#).
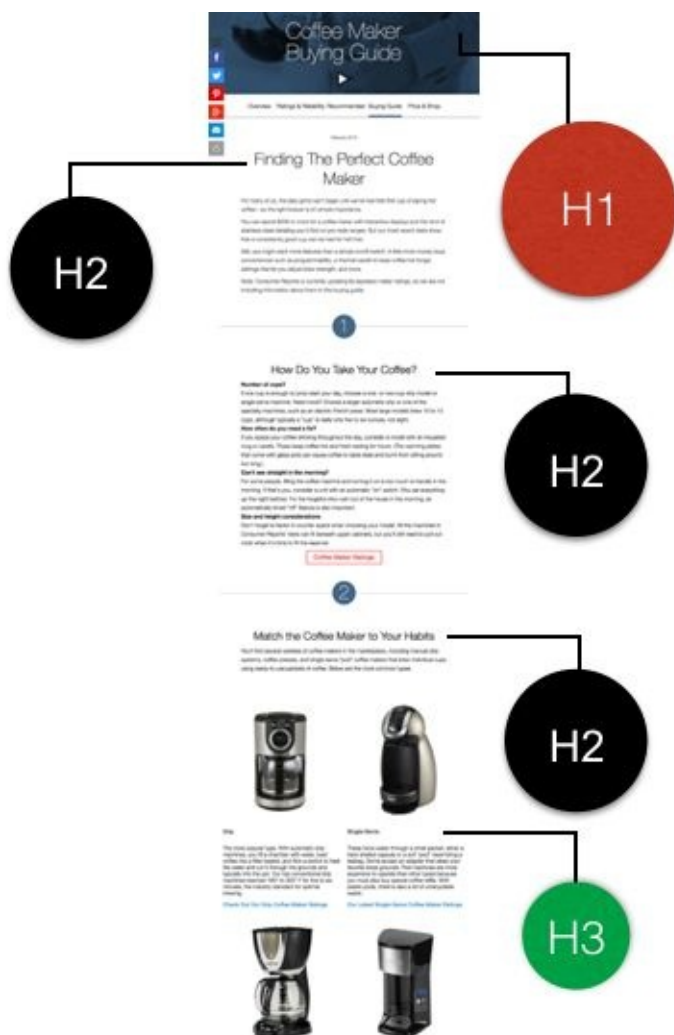
On-page3: Meta Tags & Snippet

Meta tags is a strange thing. It's everywhere but yet most people don't even know they exist. It also means different things to different people. To Facebook fan page owners, it is the page name and short description. To programmers it is just a piece of profile code <meta> they can add at the top of a webpage inside <head>. To ordinary users, it tells them what each page is about on the top of each tap on the browser. To Google though, it is to learn what the page is about and making it into a snippet.

For SEOs, meta tag is the easiest and most effective way to tell Google what each webpage is all about.

Meta title tag is the snippet's title and meta description tag is the snippet's description.

Here is what it looks like:

Here is the same page looking from Google search result:
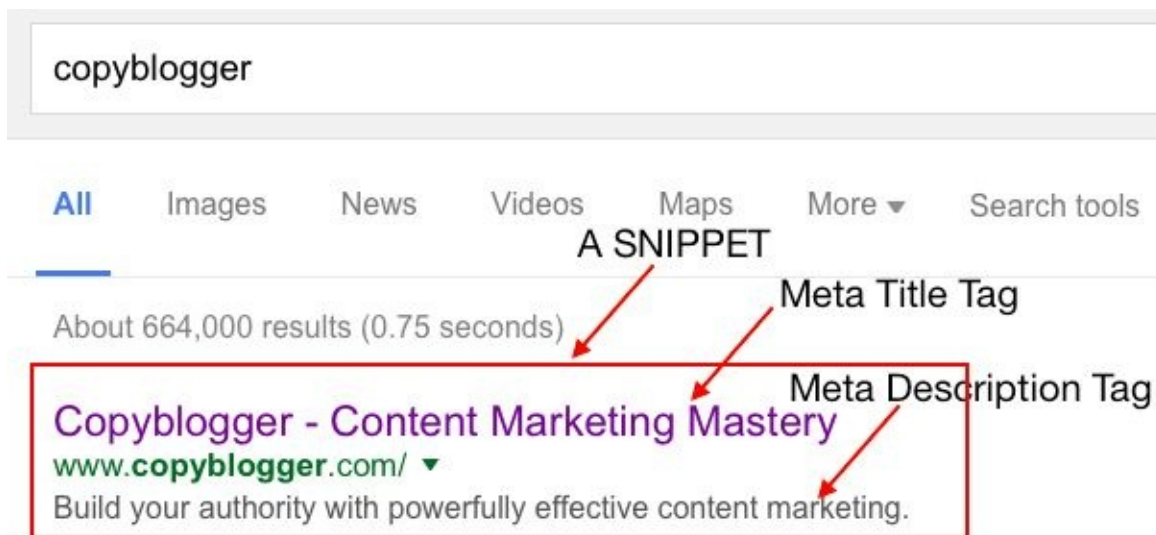
You can also have "rich snippet" to gain even more clicks like below, with full meta data:

(Ask your web developer for this, or if you are using CMS, google for rich snippet plugins)

After you have mastered your write skills for the title and description you need to think about the space a snippet allows. Ideally, you want to make every space count.

Google limits space of text displaying on a snippet. If it's too long, it will be cut out and truncate with ellipses like this title. Macmillan..

As of latest, Google just made the snippet longer:

Desktop computer:

Title = 70 characters

Description = 100 per line

Mobile phone:

Title = 78 characters (600 pixels)

Description = 100 per line

The most important thing to remember when creating meta tags for your whole site is that, you don't want to use the same tag anywhere ever. Not title nor description. Ever! It would be a waste of webpage. In other words, you want every webpage to have its own unique title and description tag. Period.

You can check the length and the duplication with many tools. Google Search Console can help you also. I'll tell you about it later.

Another thing, as we see everyday, Google snippet is dynamic. Google can manipulate your snippets as it likes as longs it's best for the clicks. Like in this case, if your webpage is missing the data to display in a snippet e.g. You forgot to write meta description tag and left it empty, Google will pull any content it finds on your webpage at will, to display as the description snippet instead and it could get very ugly. And if your webpage only contains a flash image, you could see your snippet appear with the words like "terms and condition" or "contact us" etc. because when Google doesn't find any text, it would desperately pull the only text it finds which could come from navigator or footer menu text.

So, word of advice: don't leave anything empty.

Also a note on the character limit from searchengineland.com:

"It's important to note that pixels, not characters, are the measurement that Google actually uses for search results and title length. We use characters as a more practical measurement, which is why character limits can only be an approximation, because characters like 'w' take up much more pixel space than characters like 'i' or 'l'."

Yup, snippet is a serious business for advanced SEOs. I feel, it's more for people who already doing OK in SEO and has nothing else to craft. You can write a 200 pages book only about snippet if you really dig into it. So if you want to know more, read what Google has to say here. Read an extensive guide on this site.

Snippet Simulation
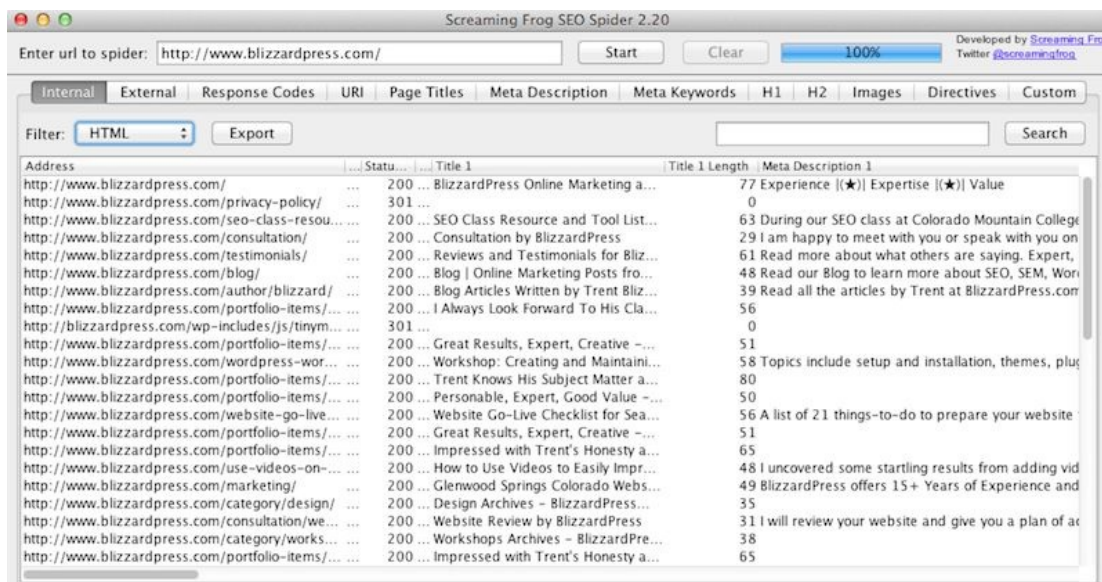
It's much easier if you can see what you type in your snippet, like looking in a mirror. Just use this snippet simulator tool: https://websiteadvantage.com.au/Google-SERP-Emulator Or for mobile use this one: http://www.mobileserps.com/

I recommend you do craft all you important pages or high rank pages first, to gain more clicks from that pages you already have some traffic from Google.

Page URL	http://www.domain.com/	Acquire Text
Page Title	Domain Name Registration and Web Hosting | Domain.com	
		474/600 pixels
Page Meta Description	Register a domain name and transfer domains. Reliable web hosting and VPS. Powerful website, blog, and ecommerce tools. 12 years, millions of customers.	
		152/~157 characters
Image		
Rich Text	No Rating	Date
Search Words		

To see all snippet data of all your web pages in a list just like below image, use Web Auditor software from link-assistant.com (Free version won't let you copy to clipboard or save project) or Integrity or Screaming Frog SEO (the last 2 are expensive if buy).

When you use this kind of software you will start to see many flaws behind the scenes of your site. Usually, you should see many missing meta tags. 90% of websites have missing meta tags, especially the description tag and too long too short meta tags which become bad looking snippets. Start working with that.

On-page4: Body text

In modern day SEO, we see many SEO experts say, just write for the users and Google will follow. I'm all for that, but I also think it wouldn't hurt to insert some keywords to my body text here and there, as long as it looks natural. To me, natural means inserting just enough keywords so you readers don't feel it. Just enough keywords without ruining the smoothness of your written conversations and points you are trying to get across. Just enough to help your article understood by Google so your article won't appear like a movie full of advertising brands.

Here is what body text looks like:
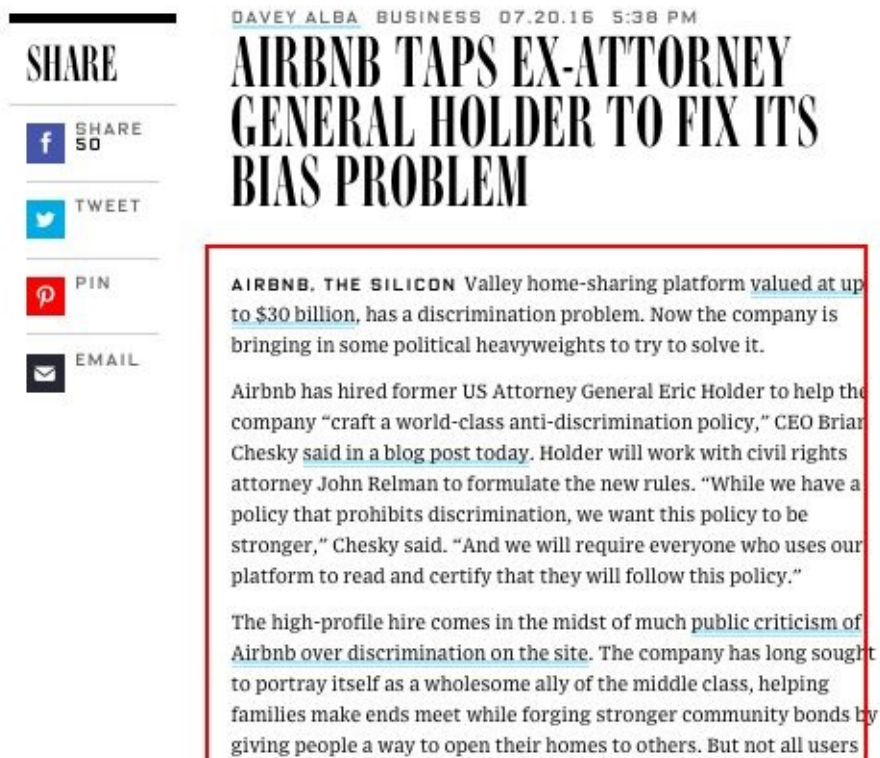
This is an article from wired.com and I don't think they give a shit about inserting keywords in their online articles at all. They don't need to. They are already famous with high traffic and probably don't even care about Google. But for most of us, it's the opposite.

However, if you looked at this article closely, you see the keyword "airbnb" about 3-4 times. This is just the right amount to add for 3 paragraphs without freaking out Google.

If you write your own article on your site, I would suggest you to stop thinking about keywords at the beginning and just go for it. Go check out your competitors to see what they are doing with the topic and aiming to do better:

With in depth information and longer length (divide the story with sub headers) article. (More images and video) Write like there's no tomorrow, until there's no question left on the topic and done. After your article was done, then think about your target keywords. Insert your target keywords to your article like adding a pinch of salt into your soup. It shouldn't taste too salty. There is really no definite number of keywords you can or can't insert. Just do it carefully though. Don't forget that body text isn't the only place you can do it as I already show you on other elements.

Internal linking

In the image earlier you see many underline words, most of them usually are internal links that the author have made themselves to refer to other pages. See it better at below image, mouse hover to see the URL that the link leads to in the status bar.

Each one is linked to other article on its own site. This on-page technique has been done since the dawn of SEO, it helps SEO a lot. It's so popular and so effective, everybody does it. It's not only to keep your users to stay on your site longer but it's like rank voting to my own webpages just like backlinks so the webpage that got link can be understood better by Google. Therefore, rank better.

Just don't create link using one word or one keyword but link a whole sentence or a few words like in example, because linking with a keyword could send spammy signal to Google.

Other things to add to your content

Add anything to make your content or article post more useful, more volume (longer length), more variety of format (text + images + videos etc.), easier to understand and to better prove your points. They are all good for your ranking. Basically, do anything to make your content better than your competitors. So what can you do?

Apart from skill writing….

You can add more value to your content with these:

- Images (don't forget to add img alt tag because Google doesn't see image)

- Comment box (Most CMS provide this already)

- Diagram (including graphic, drawing etc.)

- Bullet points

- Table

- File download

- Youtube videos

- User reviews

and also don't be scared to link to your sources. Give credit to other sites you have gathered information from. It makes your site a little more real and more credible to Google.

User friendly

I include this ranking factor in the content and on-page section because it is about what you do on the page.

What user friendly has got to do with SEO? As you've already been told. What's best for user is what's best for SEO. This has nothing to do with inserting keyword into your pages but it's about making your user happy. It's the ease of use of your site and the most important topics these days are: responsive (mobile friendly site) and page loading speed.

Users on mobile has been exceeding the desktop for sometimes now (Mobile 70% and Desktop is 30% and mobile number keeps going up every day) and Google ranks mobile-friendly sites on mobile search result the highest. Check it out.
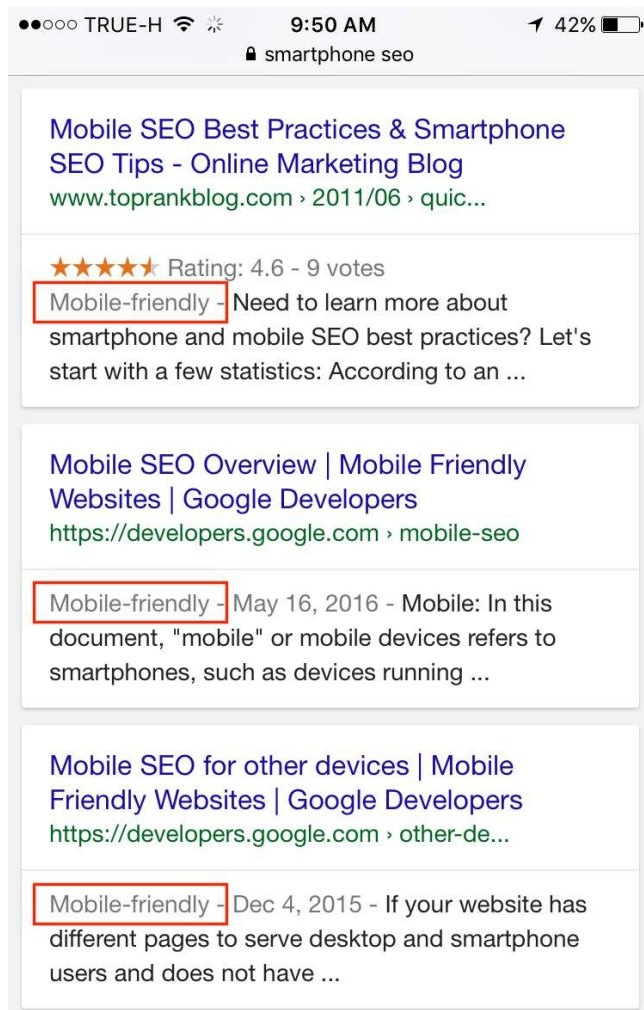
If you're using a CMS like WordPress, it's more likely that your site is already responsive which means your site can morph into various particular layouts to serve the screen size of the devices it is being opened. If you are on desktop, open your site and try resize your browser's window and you see what I mean, if not, try a site like engadget.com to see what I mean. Or you can test your website for responsiveness at:

http://quirktools.com/screenfly/

Or:

https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/mobile-friendly/

If you don't have a responsive website, don't freak out. Slowly getting into the world of responsive, go ask your web developer how to go about this the best way. You can switch your platform to modern CMS like WordPress…I know I know, it's easier said than done.

What if you have a big old corporate site and need to keep that big and old database, then you might not want to switch platform but just hire a programmer to edit your style sheet to convert your old site into a responsive design. It will be worth it and worth so much more in the future because soon there will be nobody left on the desktop world but a bunch of geeks.

Site loading speed:

I never thought to do anything about my site being slow, I never thought Google would care that much and I also was lazy. I just want to focus on the content. Then I found out that one of my original content was outranked by a site that stole my content. Yes, it can happen to anyone if their sites have technical flaws. Never again I would be careless about technical site of things, especially about site loading speed.

One of my big clients revamp the whole website to a brand new CMS but as it turned out the new system is 5 times slow than the old HTML. Even though it's a responsive mobile ready platform, ranks were dropping. While all my client's competitors sites loaded around 8-10 seconds. My client's site took about 15-20 seconds to load per a page. It was not unacceptable.

What I did was that I had to test the site loading speed for each page and find out what file is dragging the speed. Starting with the home page. The speed testing tool clearly show that it was the images. The new site has full screen size feature post image on every page, and the image file size was also very huge! 1MB - 2MB each. So we had to compress those images file to about 200k using Photoshop and it all worked out. For my WordPress sites, I installed image compress plugins and compress the hell out of my old post's images.

However, it could be some scripts, flash files etc., you need to find out with a tool what cause the slowness and fix it one by one. If you have no idea, you need to contact your web hosting support to find out why your site is unusually too slow and ask for the advice.

You can test your site speed with this tools:

www.webpagetest.org

https://developers.google.com/speed/pagespeed/

For the webpagetest.org just enter your URL and choose the nearest country to test. Look for waterfall graphic (see image below), and it will show you which file on your webpage take loading time too long, you will notice the anomaly right away. It can be any type of files that will take unusually long compare to other files.

Try to keep your home page speed loading not more than 9 seconds at least. The faster the better for ranking! (Google Analytics also has a menu that show your site speed performance, check it out)

	Load Time	First Byte	Start Render	Speed Index	DOM Elemen
First View	6.470s	2.822s	5.254s	6273	45
Repeat View	4.967s	2.830s	4.600s	4992	45
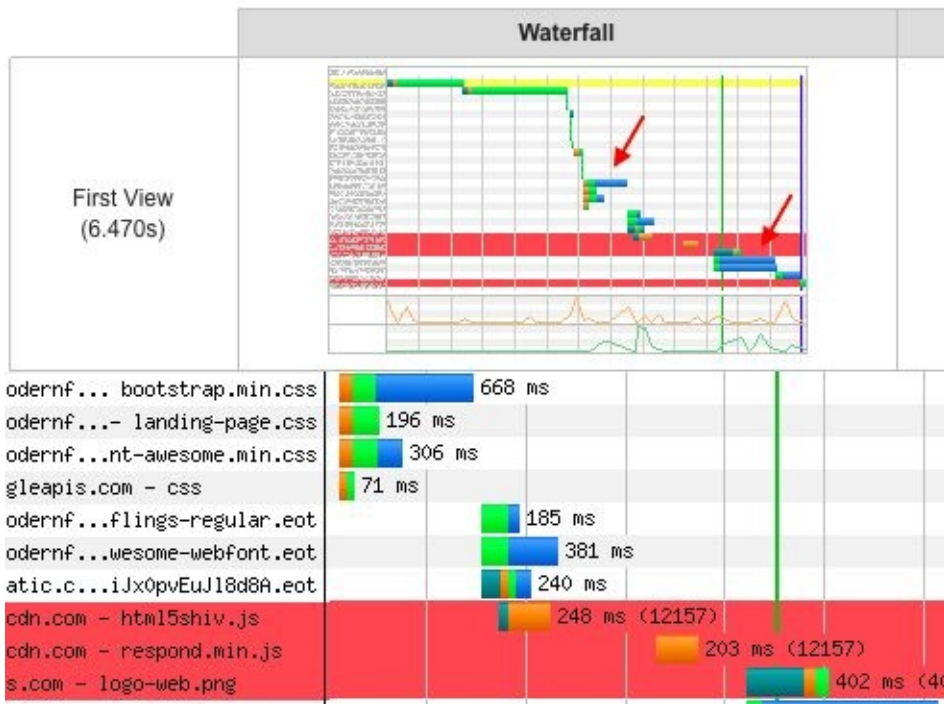
[Moz](#) also has other useful info about this.

Done for Step 2. I can say that the fun taks have been done. Here comes the tedious part. The last SEO process – link building.

CHAPTER SIX
STEP3: LINK BUILDING

Stealing backlinks

As I already pointed out how important backlink is to your ranking. Since Google has been famous in finding answers, backlink is still one of the most important to all ranking factors. As Google pointed out many times, write quality content and people will link to you naturally…or not. No, it's hardly ever happened. Not even sending out email to 100 sites and beg for links. It's like giving money to everyone you see on the street and expect the same thing back. So what we do? We build our own links.

But where can we find such quality links (relevant content and good credit sites) in the world where people are so up tight about giving links?
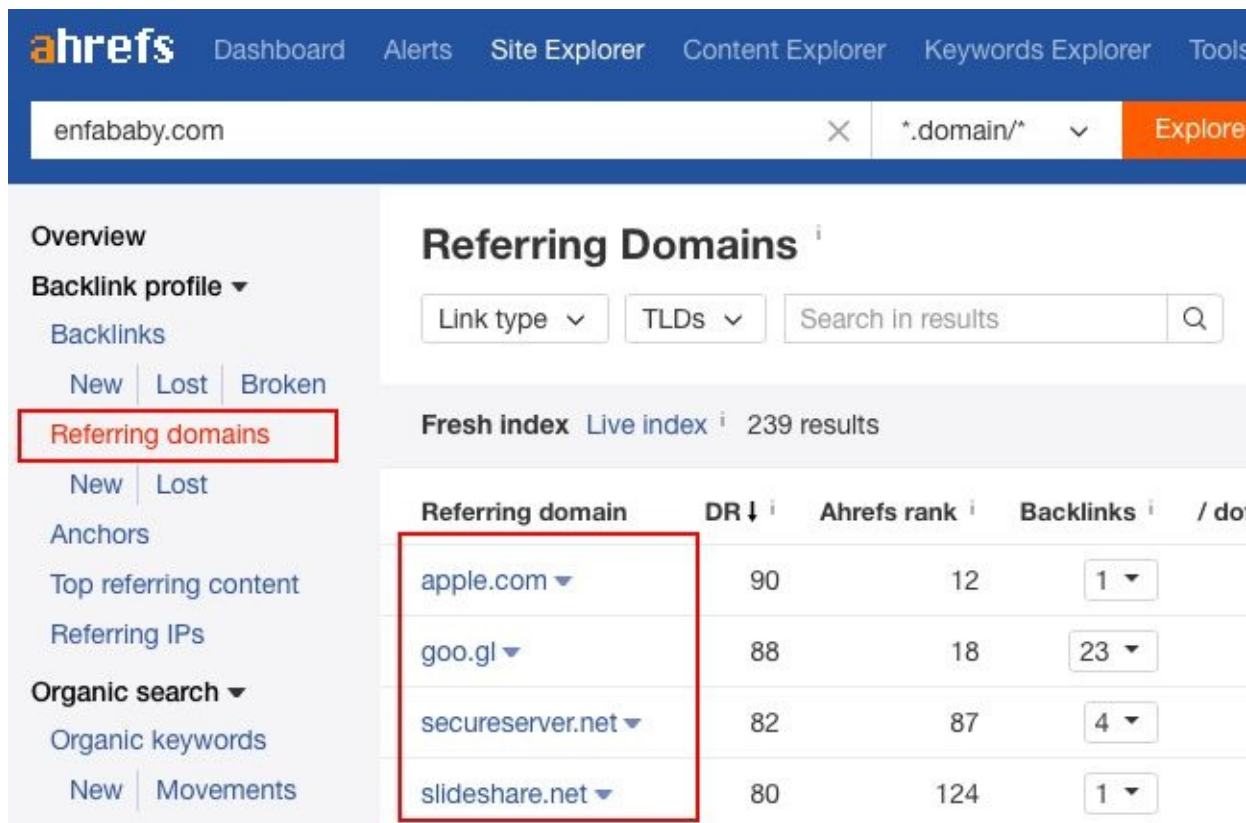
You steal it.

No, I don't mean literary steal the links but kind of..As I always said, I would look at my top 10 rank competitors first and see what they are doing. In this case, I check out where do they get their backlinks from and go build my own links to those sites where I can. How?

You need a backlink checking tool for this. Just choose one tool that you find easy to use and enter your competitors domain name or a webpage URL you want to compete with or outrank and all the backlinks your competitor has will be revealed to you in no time.

There are the tools I use myself and would recommend to a friend:

https://ahrefs.com (Click on the 'Referring domains' menu to see what sites have linked to the site you are checking - to see more referring domains or sites, you must signup for 30 days free trial, just don't forget to cancel before it charged you if you don't want to be a member)
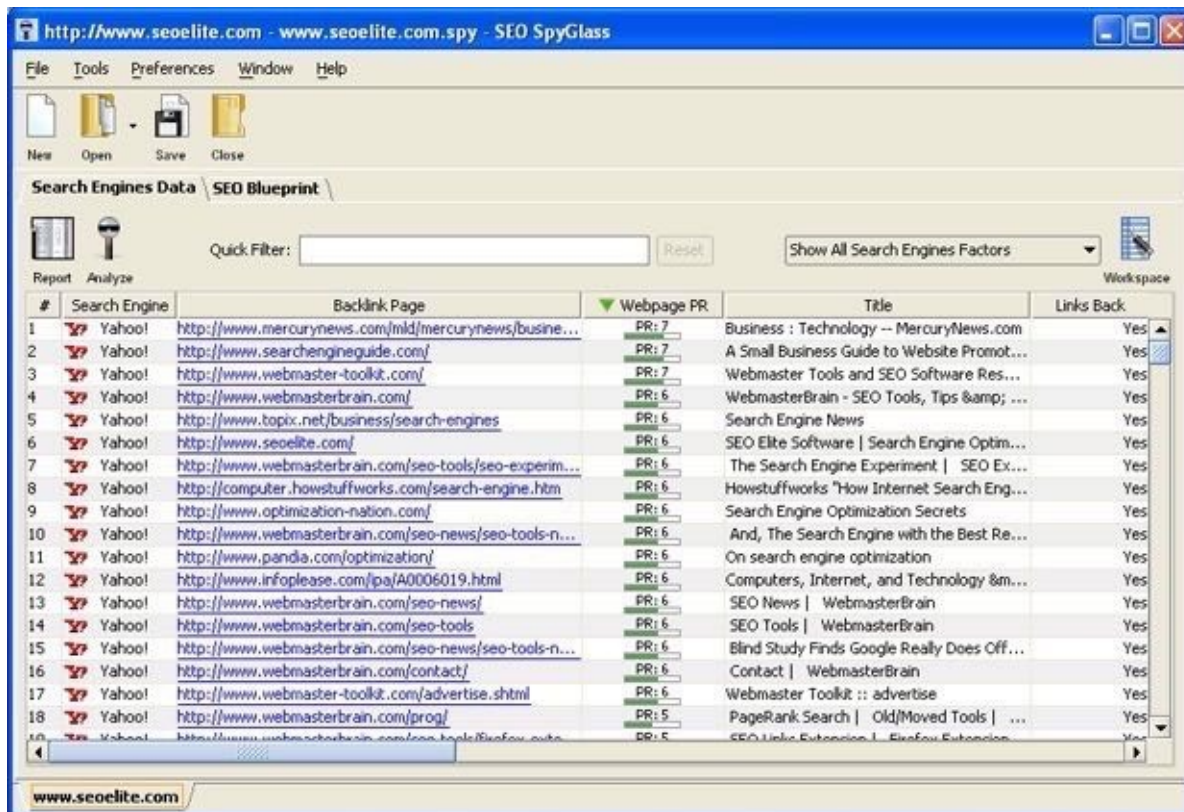
http://www.link-assistant.com/seo-spyglass/

Just download free version. Enter your competitor's url and you will see all the backlinks. Free version won't allow you to save project or copy the data to clipboard but you can still see all the backlinks for free.


Once you see your competitor's backlinks, it's like knowing your competitor's secret of ranking. You just need to find the links that you can also build for yourself.

Creating profiles anywhere

Any websites that allow you to create a profile, it usually allows you to put your link there. This is what we do a lot here and it helps boost us better ranking. It's not the most powerful backlink but this is the easiest way to build your own some quality backlinks.

Facebook fan page

Just create your own Fan Page even if you don't want to have one or don't have time to manage it. Create it and keep posting your site's content to it too. Promote your fan page from time to time with 20-30 bucks a month to not be so deserted like a grave yard. Don't just open the fan page for the sake of putting profile link there. It's in the 'About' tap. Make it natural and believable! Oh I forgot, put your link on your personal profile too.
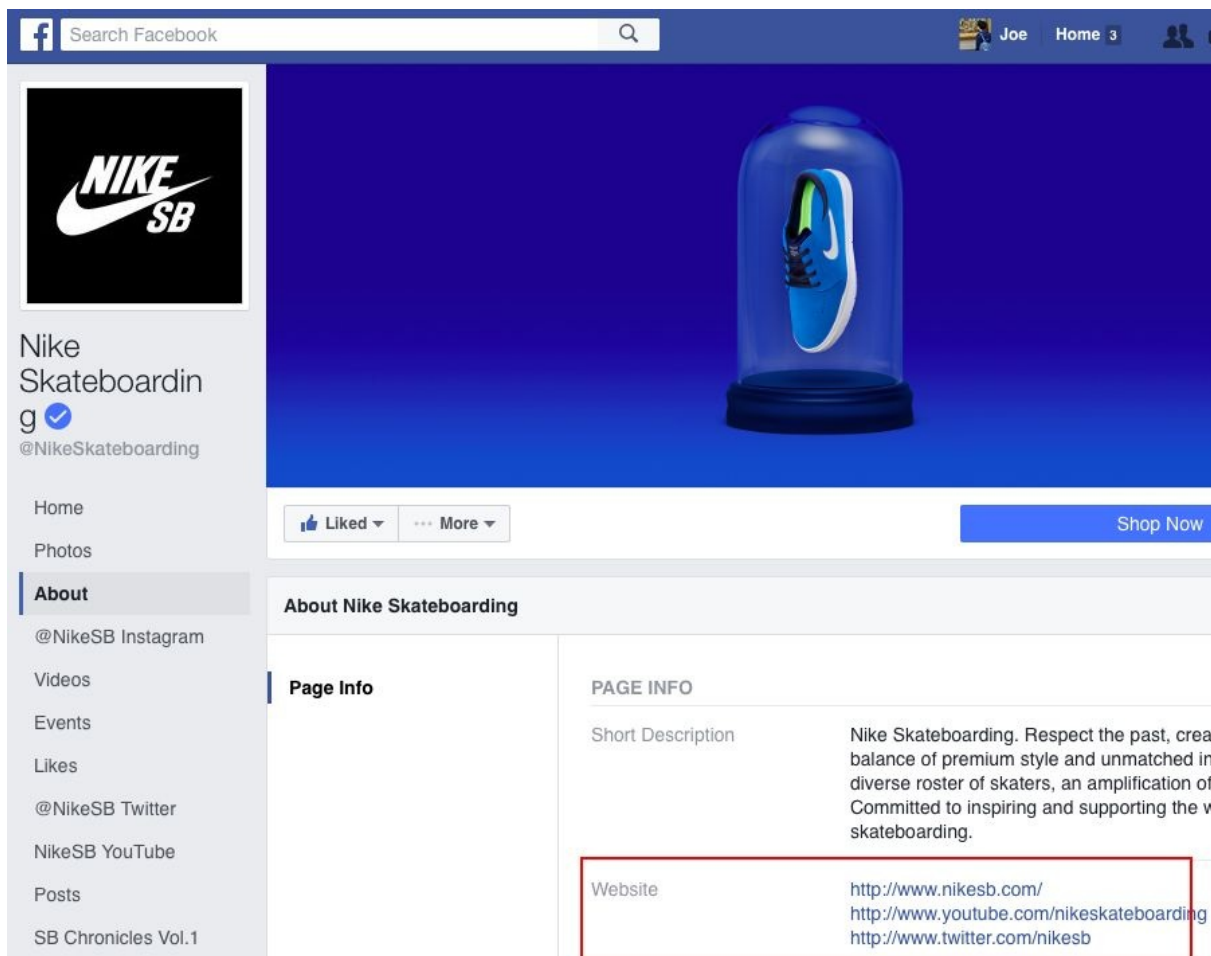
Google local business

Even if you don't need to build backlinks you still need to submit your business information to this one. I can't stress the importance for this enough. Anyone with a website and care to have organic traffic must do this. Go here:
https://business.google.com/create

And add your business info, locate your location and verify with the post mail, and add your website link there. It's very easy and will appear when people search for your unique brand name.

There are many more you can do: Linkedin, Slideshare.net (there are many more pdf sharing sites, go find them), Dmoz.org (very old but do it anyway), Alexa, Pinterest, Instagram, all the social sites out there etc. This site show you more info.

Social posts and youtube link

   Even though these are the links that are not that powerful but they help a lot in bring traffic to your site and any links that bring traffic to your site can have some impact on the ranking. On the social sites you can always post links of your site's content everyday. Once you published your content, you must post it on your fan page or twitter page or more social sites. Make sure the link is easy to see like so:
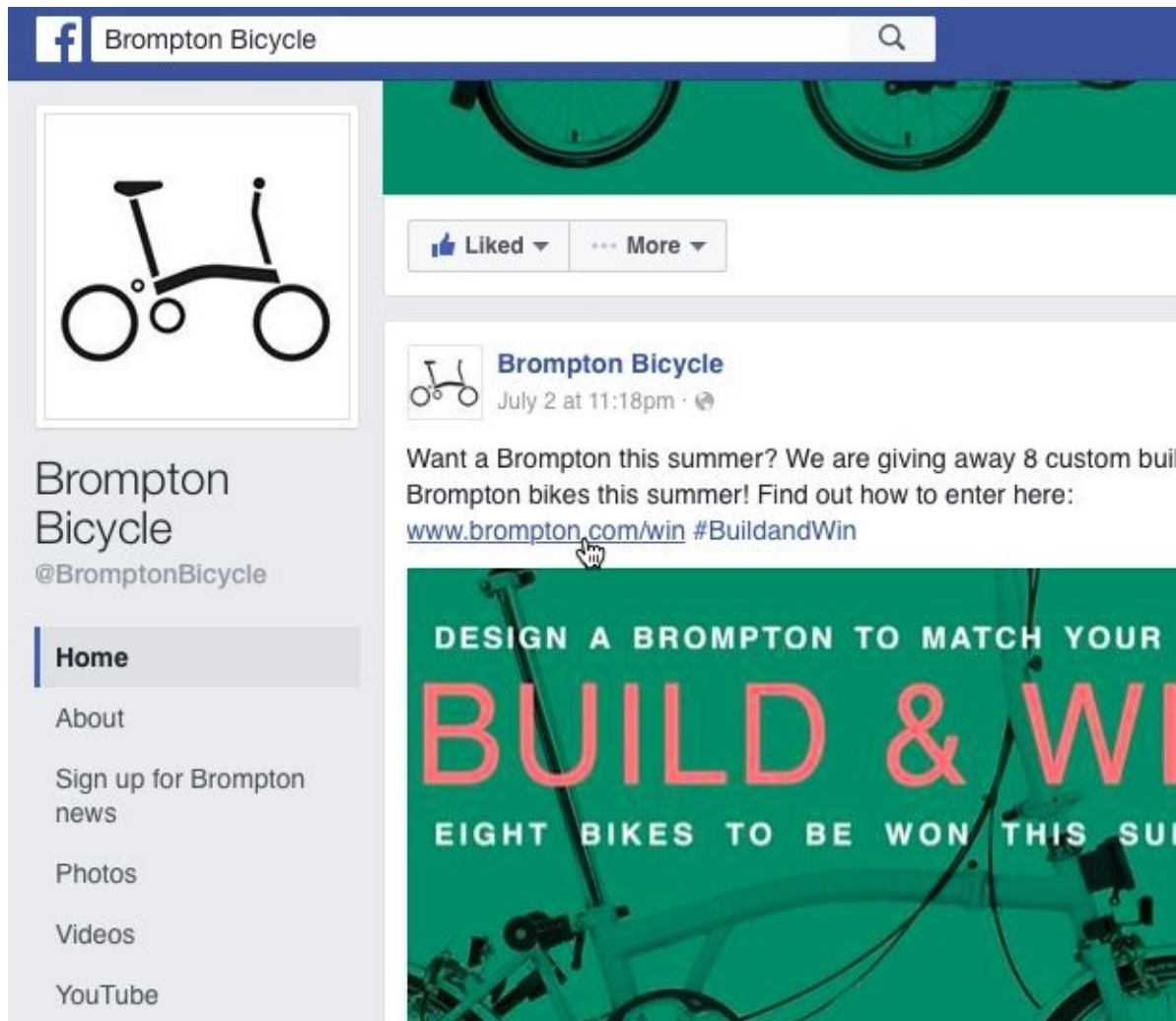
   Also, you have youtube video which you can add your link below in the description.

Verge X10 - Fast and Lightweight Tern Folding Bike

Bikes and Life

✓ Subscribed   ⚙ 3,010

➕ Add to   ➦ Share   ••• More

Published on 20 Apr 2016

Buy your Verge X10 here: https://www.bikesandlife.com/collecti...

The Tern Verge X10 folding bike was designed to be the ultimate combination of lightweight and simp

pedigree for speed. One of the ways the Verge X10 achieves such a high degree of performance is by

wide range of gears. By sticking to 10 gears the Verge X10 is very simple to operate. You just click one

Guest blogging

Backlinking nowadays is more like a content marketing (promoting your content) and this is the most popular way to do it. This is what every SEOs recommend, reaching out to other blogs or sites to gain popularity and of course, backlinks. If you are a decent writer who write your own blog this one is perfect for you. This is the hard way to gain link but the result is worth the sweat, it's the most powerful link anyone can build themselves. It's called "guest blogging". It's about sending out your content to other sites in your industry (the more authoritative the better) and leave your site's link at the end of the article.

You can start with the easiest ones, the ones that wanted your articles already.

Here are the blogs you can start with:

http://www.petersandeen.com/list-of-guest-blogging-sites/

http://webmarketingsaga.com/the-grand-list-of-386-blogs-that-accept-guest-blogging/

And more, just google for "list of sites guest blogging"

Once you feel more confidence enough, you can find more authoritative sites or the more famous sites to guest posting to gain even more powerful backlinks. You can also google for yourself to find untapped blogs for quest posting:

Use Google search queries to find blogs accepting guest contributors:

[Target keyword or your industry] + submit an article

[Target keyword or your industry] + want to write for

[Target keyword or your industry] + contribute

[Target keyword or your industry] + become an author

[Target keyword or your industry] + guest post by

[Target keyword or your industry] + now accepting guest posts

For example, if I wanted to guest blogging for SEO articles I would google as:

seo submit an article

Stealing ranking

Real traffic is always good no matter where it came from. This method is so simple and yet very effective for driving endless customers your way without high ranking needed. It's more like steal someone else's high ranking. You can easily do this yourself or hire someone else to do it if you want more.

What you need to do is go find as many blog posts as you can that are talking about a problem that one of your product or one of your webpage content can solve and post the link there. For example, in this case I was looking for "how to solve the messy mac desktop", then I found this article.

http://lifehacker.com/5932527/how-can-i-get-my-messy-desktop-under-control

What you do is just go the comment box below this blog post and post your link there like you want to make the world a better place, don't just post your link, say something useful like this:

All replies

The following replies are approved. To see additional replies that are pending approval, click Show Pending. Warning: These may contain graphic material.

Blazing-Studios > Adam Dachis
8/08/12 10:12am

Fences from stardock, awesome app, check it out at their website:

http://www.stardock.com/products/fences/

↪ Reply

Efrem Pannell > Blazing-Studios
8/08/12 10:14am

Not just blogs though, there are other type of websites you can do this: forums, social sites, classified sites etc. But let start with blogs first though, focus on this. Especially the blog posts that have high ranking.

Okay! We have learn and done all the SEO works. Well done!

So next let's see how we do with all the success measurement tools.

CHAPTER SEVEN
STEP4: MEASURE YOUR SUCCESS

The thing about Ranking checker

Now it's time to know the result of your SEO hard work.

You optimised your site and you sure want to know what ranking your webpages are at. There are many tools you can choose from to check your rankings. For me personally, I use this one: Rank Tracker by link-assistant.com.

The thing about rank checker tool that you need to know is that, for an SEO professional you may need to produce your ranking report regularly. For example, so you can see the progress every month in your monthly meeting, and be able to kick each other's butts to improve more. And to manually clicking the button to check rank for each keyword on time every month is too scary here. If you don't want to take that risk, you need a rank checker tool that can do the job automatically. In a schedule manner in every week, every month etc.. And the interface of choices, you might hate one but love another. One might available for Mac but not PC but if you use online tool in your browser, no need to go to platform war.

So if you are looking for the rank checker or an SEO Tool for your agency or in SEO professional service, you need to keep these in mind too. Most of the online tools can do this but not every stand alone software can do it.

Here are the software:

**FREE/ PAID: Stand alone software for install on your computers:**

www.link-assistant.com (Rank Tracker Mac/PC, it also has on-page SEO software "Web Auditor")

www.webceo.com (Only for PC and it also available as online tool as well)

For link-assistant company, you can do most of the stuff but you can not save the project. Paid version will update regularly, more than you would like it to, you need to buy the whole software for a few hundreds and then pay monthly fee of $10 or something which I don't recommend. There are many more cheaper options out there.

FREE: Google chrome extension:

SEO SERP Workbench
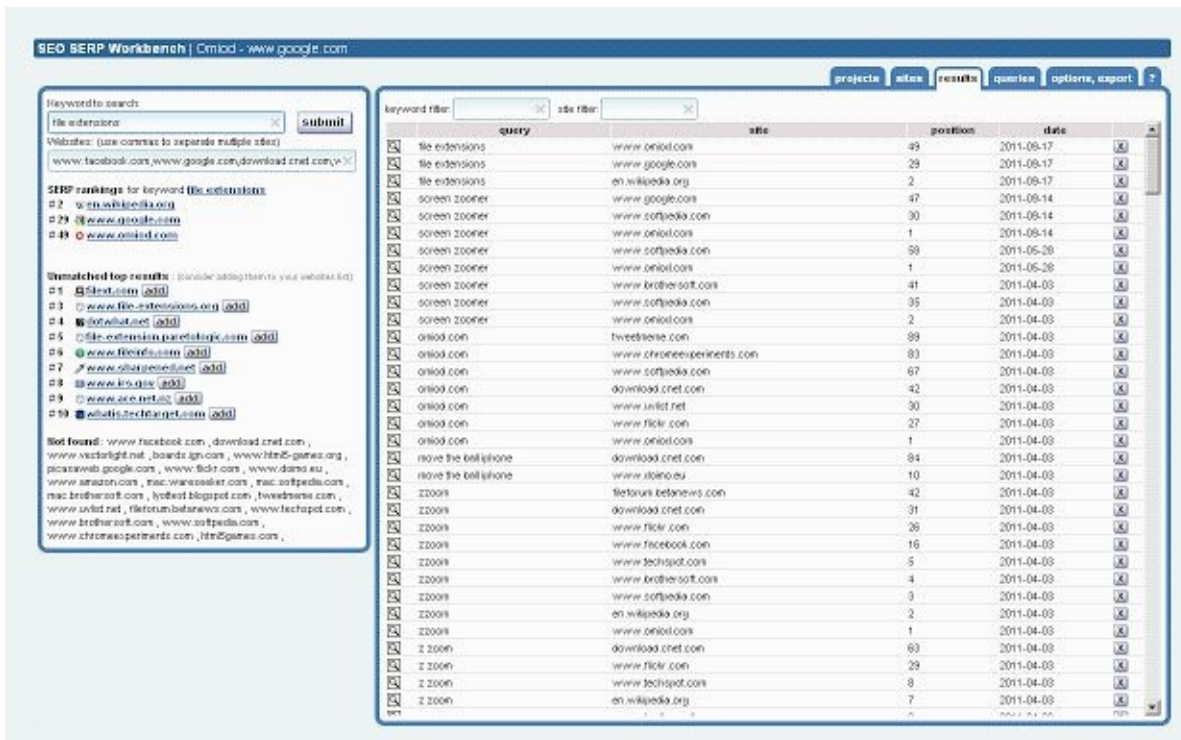
PAID: Online tools, just log in a use it on your browser:

raventools.com

seoeffect.com

moz.com/tools

Google search console (this can only check your average ranking positions)

**There are many more SEO tools - see below webpages:**

https://moz.com/blog/100-free-seo-tools

http://www.lunametrics.com/blog/2015/06/08/my-15-favorite-free-seo-tools/

https://blog.bufferapp.com/free-seo-tools

Or google for "list of SEO tools"

Google Search Console

Once you have done the SEO works, it's time to see the result. But first, you need to ask…

Is your site having any issues with Google?

Google Search Console can tell you all about the issues you have with Google search and how you can fix it. That's why this tool is so freaking great for SEOs. It's the only tool you can use to communicate with Google search directly, can't get better than that.
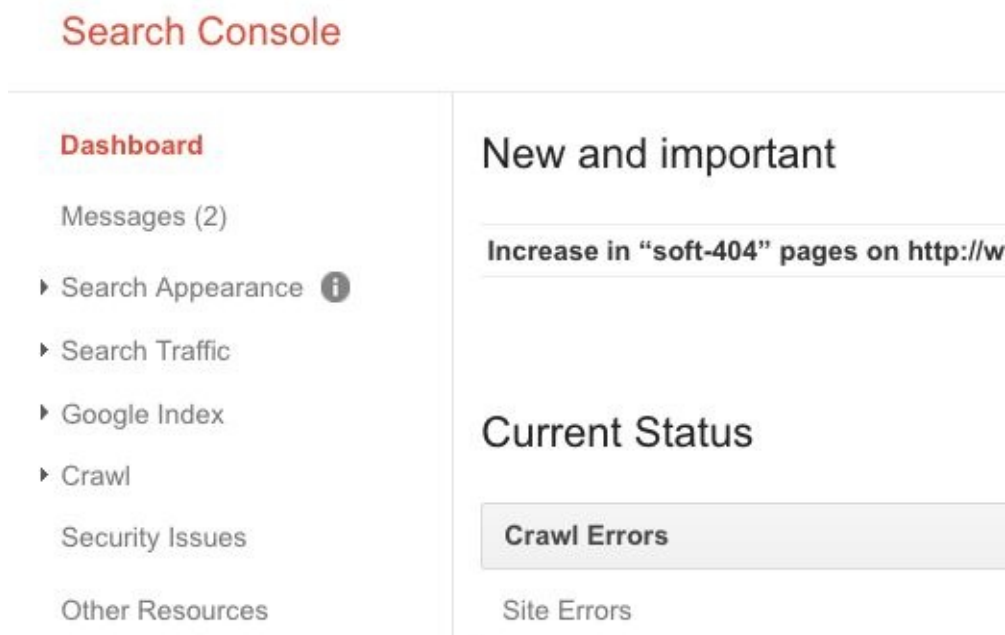
This Google free tool used to be called "Google Webmaster Tools" for a long time. It just changed the name in 2015 for some reason. This tool will allow you to monitor or check up on your site's technical health related to Google search engine as well as ranking health.

Google Search Console will help you the following:

- Warn you with messages about technical issues with Google search e.g. Page not found, Google can not access your webpages, your web mobile version sucks etc.

- You can tell Google you have fixed the problem webpages and make the warning messages go away.

- In the 'Site setting' you can tell Google what country your site is from (where is the hosting). You should do this accurately too, so it knows the intension of your site better and then Google would show and rank your site with less problem.

- See what webpages are being indexed. Does Google index Too many or too few? Does it index the pages that you don't want people to see?

- Blocking Google from indexing some of your webpages.

- See your meta tags issues (the length, the duplicates and how many missing)

- See your backlinks, what websites you have backlinks from.

- Allow you to submit your sitemap.xml so Google can update its index about your site better and hopefully rank better. You don't have to do this for the site that has less than 50 pages.

- See how often Google crawl your site (Crawl stats). This will tell you what Google is doing behind your back for the last 90 days to your site. The stat can go up and down depends on your site's activities. You basically want the graph to be stable. To be honest, i don't look at this any more, it gives me headache. My life has been pretty damn fine without it. If you want to know more read this from Google support.

- See what keywords people are searching on Google to find your webpages and how many click on them. (This is important for SEO, I'll talk about this in the next topic).

And many more that I don't actually use, if you are curious go here. Or find a book about it.

To use it, just signup to Google Search Console then submit your site's domain name and follow on screen instruction to verify as an owner of your site to the service. Most popular way to verify are adding a tag to your html or upload a small file to your root. If you don't know how to do this, ask for help from your web developer. Read how to at Google support site here.

Verify your ownership of **http://**   **.com/.** Learn more.

Recommended method	**Alternate methods**

○ **HTML tag**
Add a meta tag to your site's home page.

○ **Domain name provider**
Sign in to your domain name provider.

○ **Google Analytics**
Use your Google Analytics account.

○ **Google Tag Manager**
Use your Google Tag Manager account.

VERIFY   Not now

Queries report to boost traffic

As many SEO beginners understand, the goal in all of this is to gain high ranking. As high as we can. However, to SEO professionals, ranking high is not enough. You need to rank high and also have as many people click on your search result too. There's not much point to have your snippets rank high and nobody clicks on them. Oh yeah may be there are points, showing off your friends or your boss and make your brand look good. That's about it.

And nothing feels better than being able to improve what you already have. In this case, you are improving webpages that already have some good ranks on Google so you can squeeze more clicks out of them. This way is much easier than try to find new traffic from Google.

If you have 1+ year old site, and don't know what to do first to improve your organic traffic. This is it. This is the easiest way to start.

So how to squeeze more clicks from your ranking?

You need a tool to show you the nasty truth about how many clicks you gain for each of your webpage that being found on Google for a certain keyword. You need Google Search Console's "Search Analytics" or the "Search Queries" report to tell you.

Queries report helps you analyse your webpages' performance on Google. How much your webpage being found or show (impressions), how much click out of all the impressions (CTR%) and in what ranking (position) for a certain keyword that being search.

Access the tool on this menu "Search Analytics":
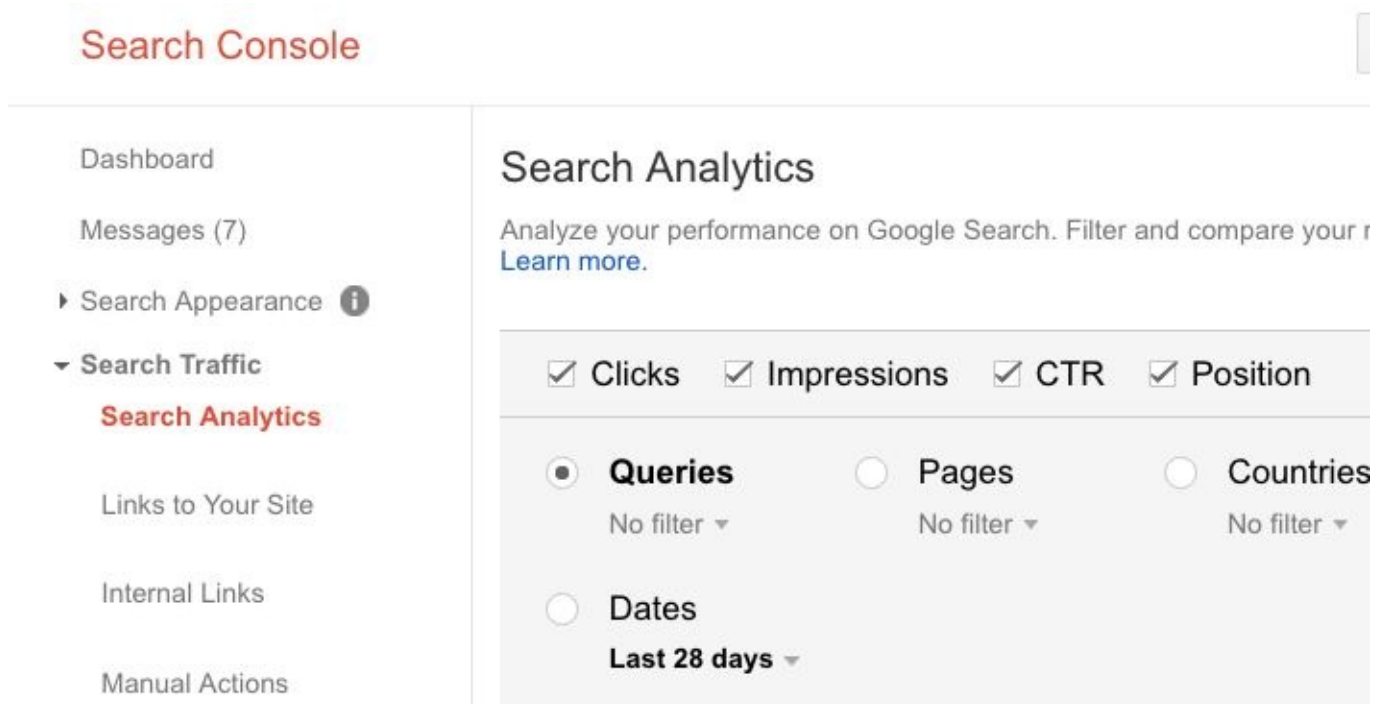
This is the dashboard for queries report: CTR% (Click through rate%) is what you need to use as your webpage's benchmark to improve upon:

	Total clicks	Total impressions	Avg. CTR	Avg. position
	96,575	1,224,218	7.89%	6.8

CTR% is your goal, it is what you need to improve by writing better snippets for each webpage.
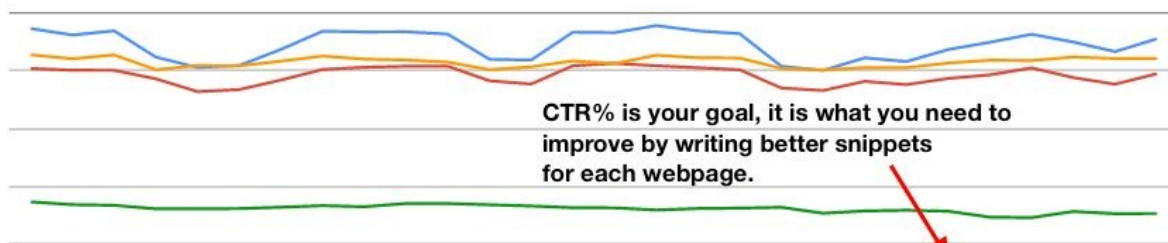
Keywords people search and found your page on Google

	Queries	Clicks	Impressions	CTR	Position	
1		7,340	80,034	9.17%	5.2	»
2		668	52,304	1.28%	8.5	»
3		834	39,069	2.13%	6.4	»
4		461	25,803	1.79%	9.6	»
5		1,129	25,247	4.47%	8.6	»
6		5,422	15,556	34.85%	1.4	»
7		84	8,279	1.01%	8.5	»

You should click on each keyword (the small icon next to each keyword) to go to Google search and see your snippet one by one compare with your competitors and you should have some idea why it has low clicks.

CTR 4% and above is great but lower than that need fixing ASAP.

Focus on one page at a time. Keep your eyes on each CTR%. It's what you need to improve. Revise your snippet and make it stand out more. You goal here is to make people click more!

Just imagine how much traffic you could gain more, for the high 50,000+ impressions page (number of times your page appear on google) by increasing just 2-3% of the CTR%. Do your math. Do this for all your page that already rank on 1st page of Google, could be the game changer.

Position column is your average ranking that Google is keeping the record.

Please note that Google won't let you see your history data longer than 90 days even if you setup your Search Console to connect with Google Analytics (like below image). Don't ask me why.

Acquisition

Overview

▸ All Traffic

▸ AdWords

▾ Search Console NEW

  Landing Pages

  Countries

  Devices

  Queries

▸ Social

▸ Campaigns

+ Add Segment

Explorer

Clicks ▾ vs. Select a metric

● Clicks

12,000

6,000

...   May 8   May 15

Google Analytics

GA is basically the tool for traffic report (not cars report). And it's not only the report about SEO but also the report for everything about your traffic. Where your users coming from and what are they doing on your site too. You need to know this so you can treat your new and return users the right way so they come back for more and also, so you know what is working and not working in your all your campaigns.

The ultimate goal in using GA is to be able to increase your traffic and make the most out of the traffic you have to make more profit.

To use GA, you just need signup and it will provide you a piece of code to install onto every page of your site in the backend to verify the ownership of your site. You can also just install Google Tag Manager too, GTM is so great, you only need to install one piece of code and never have to install another code in the backend of your site in your life again, it acts as a hub for all your tracking codes. Find out about this in your own time. Ask your web developer to do this for you. If you are using WordPress, just find the best GA plugin and install.

You can also connect or setup GA to show the queries report from the Google Search Console too. You only need to be the admin user for both accounts and go to the Search Console menu and click set up and choose your website in the Search Console and that's it.

For the SEOs though, these are the mesurement in the GA that I use so much:

1. Organic traffic - this is how you measure your overall SEO success. You need to watch this report closely. Especially, traffic from Google search engine, you need to see this increase every month. If it dropped, it could mean your site is having problem with Google. Once you browse to see this organic traffic channel you can see all sort of user's behaviour in it like: how many people converted to buyers (conversions), how much time they stay, what webpage they visit the most etc.

For a new site that just born a week ago, don't freak out if you see organic traffic as low as 5-20 visits (sessions) a day. It's pretty normal. When you are doing well in SEO, you should see 1,000 visits a day at least to make some profit. Many of my client's sites starting from 0 to 10,000 visits a day from organic, which took about 2-3 years to accomplish. That's when the money start rolling in. So hang in there folks, Rome wasn't built in a day.

2. Traffic channels - after you know the overall total traffic you would certainly want to know where the come from: organic, direct (type url in the browser), referrals (come from other websites), paid adwords, organic social and custom sources for your own choosing outside Google environment (to see other campaign traffic source show up in GA, you need to create utm tagging for those campaigns e.g. Facebook ad)

3. Top traffic webpages - see the which webpages of yours making the most traffic so you can create more content like it to drive even more traffic.

4. Time spend - how much time users spend on your site in one visit (average session duration) or for each webpage at a time (average time on page). Improving time spend will help you boost ranking also. Google doesn't want people come to your site and leave right away. This is the usefulness checker for your webpages that Google also look at. However, don't expect accuracy for this measurement though. Because GA has no way of knowing the time spend of visits who only stay in one page and leave. A visit can stay 10 hours but unless that visit jump from the first page to the next page, there is no way GA would know when they exit so it shows zero time (100% bounce). Very stupid indeed. Then again, many people still use this measurement to tell if a webpage's content bad or good.

Behavior			Conversions	Goal
Bounce Rate ?	Pages / Session ?	Avg. Session Duration ?	Goal Recruitment (Goal 3 Conversion Rate) ?	
53.89% Avg for View: 53.89% (0.00%)	2.83 Avg for View: 2.83 (0.00%)	00:03:07 Avg for View: 00:03:07 (0.00%)	1.66% Avg for View: 1.66% (0.00%)	
67.47%	2.51	00:02:33	0.69%	
44.04%	3.45	00:04:11	0.68%	

5. Conversion - out of all the people who visit your site (number of visits), how many have reach a certain goal you have set e.g. buy your product, become subscribe member. You can also setup GA to work with your e-commerce site too. This way, it can give you the proper report specifically for an online store.

6. Devices e.g. OS, Mobile users, desktop users - today it's no denying that there are more people spending their time online on their smartphone than desktop. You can use GA to analyse your site performance like amount of traffic, time spend, conversion etc. for each devices so you know which one to improve. One of my client's who did not want to move to responsive site, we saw it clearly that visits from mobile did not convert to buyers much at all. We use this data to convince them that your visits from mobile sucked so bad. After they moved to responsive, the conversion from mobile was increased 100%.

▸ Demographics	☐ 1. Apple iPhone	**40,370** (24.39%)
▸ Interests	☐ 2. (not set)	**9,357** (5.65%)
▸ Geo	☐ 3. Samsung SM-J700F Galaxy J7	**9,220** (5.57%)
▸ Behavior	☐ 4. Apple iPad	**6,372** (3.85%)
▸ Technology		
▾ Mobile	☐ 5. Samsung SM-G7102 Galaxy Grand 2	**4,234** (2.56%)
Overview	☐ 6. Samsung SM-J200GU Galaxy J2	**3,846** (2.32%)
Devices	☐ 7. Samsung SM-G530F Galaxy Grand Prime	**1,994** (1.20%)
▸ Custom	☐ 8. Lava Iris 700	**1,814** (1.10%)
▸ Benchmarking		
Users Flow	☐ 9. Samsung GT-N7100 Galaxy Note II	**1,793** (1.08%)

In addition, you should notice the 4 top menus in the GA interface. Reporting is for… well..report, customisation is for you to save the view so you don't have to click and click and click to find a data every time. As for ADMIN, it is for the global setting including setting up your goal for conversion tracking.
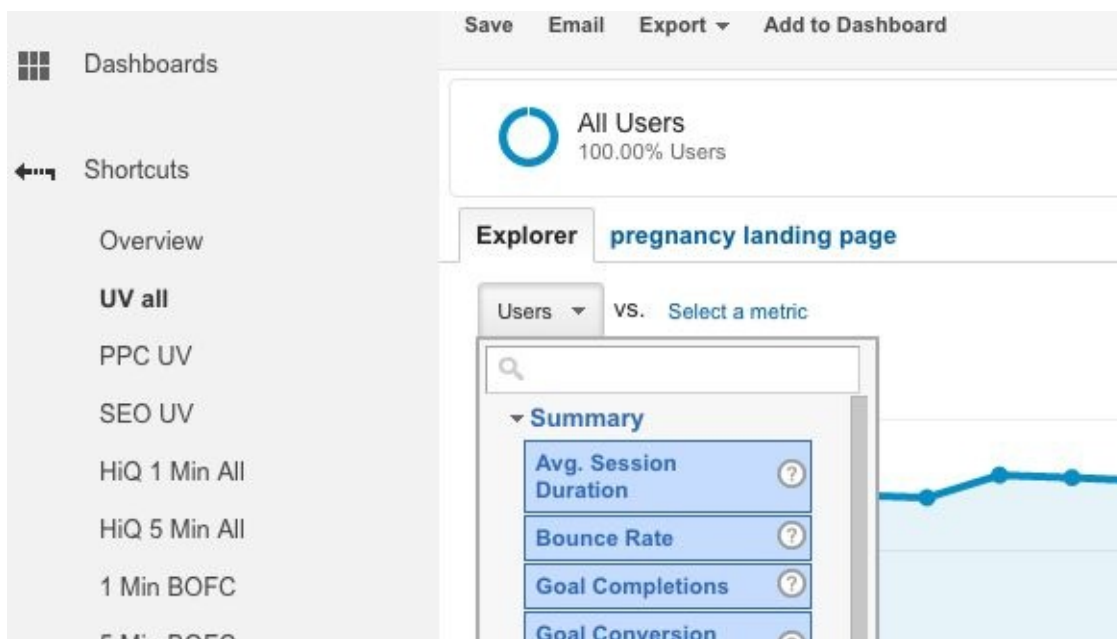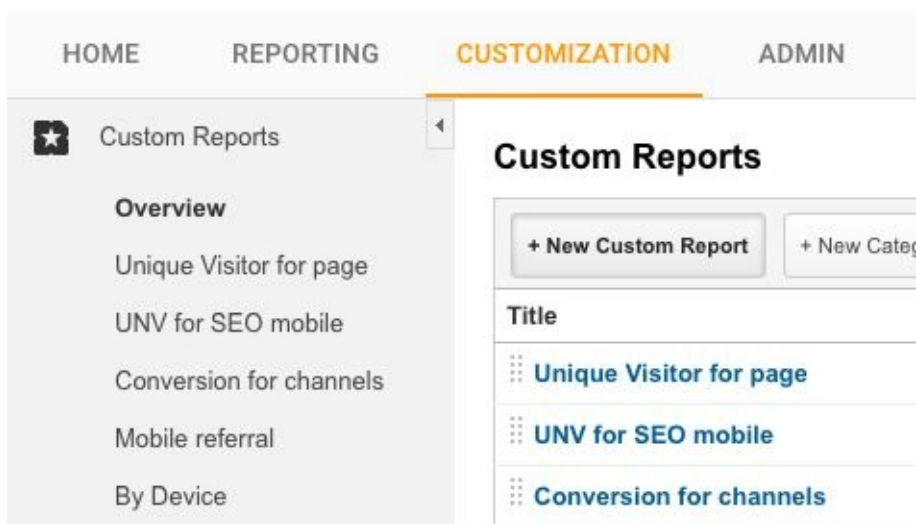
That's it for all the tools to measure your success. I usually do my report every month so that I know the progress so I will be able to tackle the issues and improve my sites…not procrastinate.

Final words

That's it folks. This was meant to be a short book and it is a short book.

One more thing though.

You can eliminate 80% of the SEO grunt works by using WordPress. We can all simply say that WordPress is SEO ready. So what is WordPress anyway?

WordPress is a blogging platform. You can create all sorts of website: blog, e-commerce, forum, image gallery site, social etc. In 5 minutes. If you would start a new website tomorrow, any SEO experts would recommend you WordPress, no doubt about it.

It's the best plug and play CMS platform (Content Management System - it's like a word processor for website), the most user friendly platform, so you can just focus on your content creation. If you want it to be more secured you install a security plugin, if you want it to be easier to create or modify you meta tags, you install an SEO plugin (Most popular is the Yoast plugin). If you want it to be an e-commerce site, you find an e-commerce template for it and so on. It's that simple.

This is where I leave you with this SEO book, get to know WordPress and how to build a website from it. It will save you so much work and time.

I hope you enjoy my book and found it useful.

If you like this book, you might like another 2 that I wrote. I have wrote another book about Google AdSense and SEO and another one about WordPress. Just search my name in Amazon.com

Thank you so much.

Joe Anucha

CHAPTER EIGHT
Bonus chapters

CHAPTER NINE
## *1 - HELLO WORDPRESS*

Road to WordPress

As you may know, WordPress is an open source (free) CMS platform where the world of professional DIY web sites possible.

In other words, if you want to create your own web site like a pro with no coding skills, this is the best choice in the world right now.

WordPress is powerful, easy and flexible.

With 72 million users worldwide and market share more than all other CMS platforms combined, making WordPress the most widely-developed content management systems in the world.

The truth is – if WordPress didn't exist, I don't know where I'd be today. I probably don't even bother having a web site at all. Or may be I'd have just signup with one of those free blog service and be doomed with its limitations.
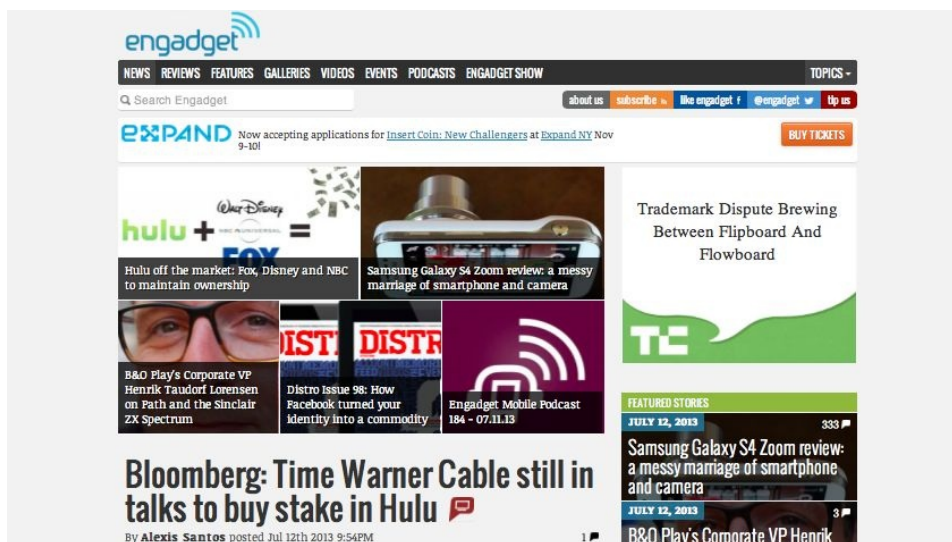
The Endless Possibility

It's been 5 years, WordPress has given me the opportunity to become a professional blogger without writing a line of code and loving every day of it.

No more wait and rely on other people. No more hiring and don't know what's going on.

No more paying $1,000 − $10,000 or more for a team of web developers to create you a professional & beautiful web site that you have no full management control. What's the point in that?

Simply put. WordPress will save your time and money in building and maintaining a perfect web site, just the way you want it.

Free resources

Another important advantage is its popularity. Like all things, the more popular, the more users.

WordPress community is huge!

There're always someone somewhere keep improving this popular WordPress platform for us for free. All you need to do is upgrade.

As I write this book, WordPress is now version 3.6 and soon it will release new upgrade for you to upgrade.

WordPress usually release new upgrades every once in 3-4 months for better security, better user interface, controls, minor bug fixes and many more.

How WordPress Came to Be

In case you're curious to know how WordPress came to be, let me tell you a brief history.

WordPress started out as a no-name free blogging platform in 2002 and now, it's the most popular web platform or CMS in the world.

It is so popular, it made its young creator as one of the 50 most important person online today along side with Facebook & Google founders.

How WordPress is Created

WordPress is an open source software which anyone could download and develop. It has template system that can transform it to any type of web site you want.

It is written in PHP Language, color and layout with CSS stylesheet and it stores your web content and settings in a database called MySQL.

Since the WordPress core files (Like an OS) and the database: member data, web content and all the settings are separated.

Therefore, you can customize your template files to make your site looks the way you want without touch or harm your content at all. That's very neat.

As the next image shown, WordPress is the easy way and the Dreamweaver is the hard way.

With WordPress you get the best of both worlds – you can be a programmer or non-programmer, WordPress lets you do both very well.
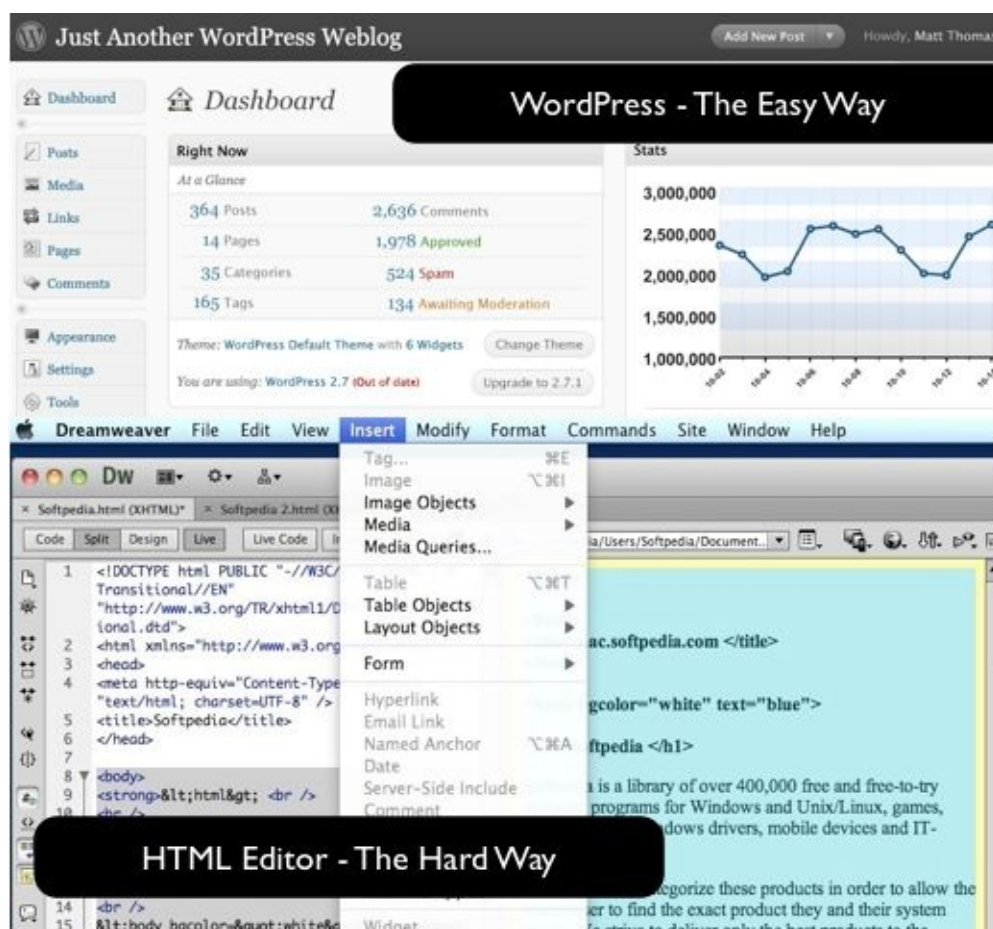
Seeing is Believing

Instead of wasting 100 pages telling you how great WordPress is, it's better to see it for yourself – the power of WordPress at work in the real world.

So, here are some of the big brands web sites powered by WordPress:

- ✓ [Engadgets](#)
- ✓ [Gizmodo](#)
- ✓ [People](#)

- ✓ [Wall Street Journal](#)
- ✓ [CNN](#)
- ✓ [Search Engine Watch](#)

Want to see more of those? Go to: [WordPress Showcase](#)

2 Types of WordPress

This image illustrates the 2 choices for 99% of the world population who want to have a web site in today's technology.

There's no better ways than this unless you're planning to build a super huge site like eBay or Amazon, that's another story. Next image illustrates the 2 choices:
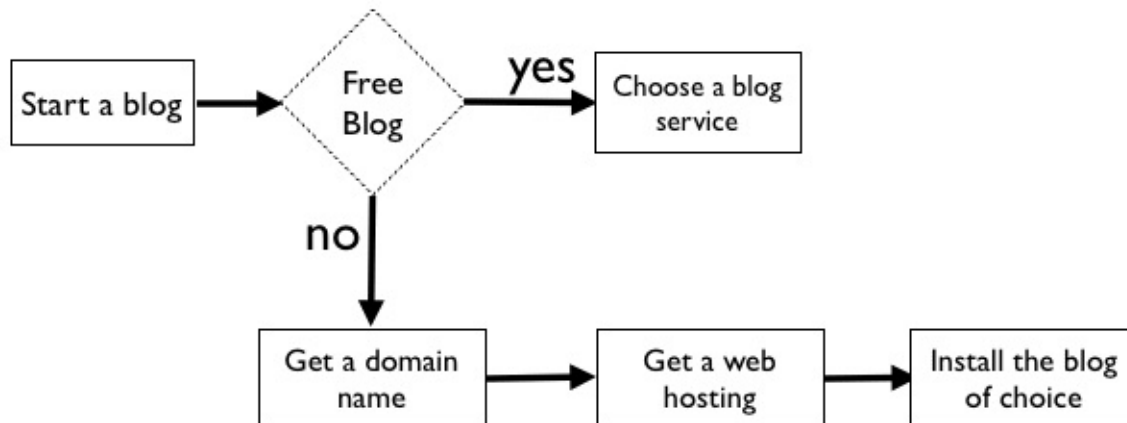
Before we get down and dirty with the installation process. Let's get one thing (or two) straight.

WordPress has 2 major platforms (not talking about WordPress MU here). One can be downloaded but another can not.

WordPress.com vs. WordPress.org

WordPress.com is a online blog service. Just like blogger.com or tumblr.com – They are not for serious bloggers. It's just like renting an apartment you can't decorate much.

While I think of WordPress.com service as a free-rent apartment – I think of WordPress.org as getting a free house, you need to rent a land (shared web hosting server) and address (domain name) for it and it will always be yours no matter what.

So, how big, how cozy or how beautiful you want your house to be is totally up to you.

And since it belongs to you, selling it is no problem.

In other words, for WordPress.org, you download it for your own use on your choice of web hosting, themes, plugins and everything else.
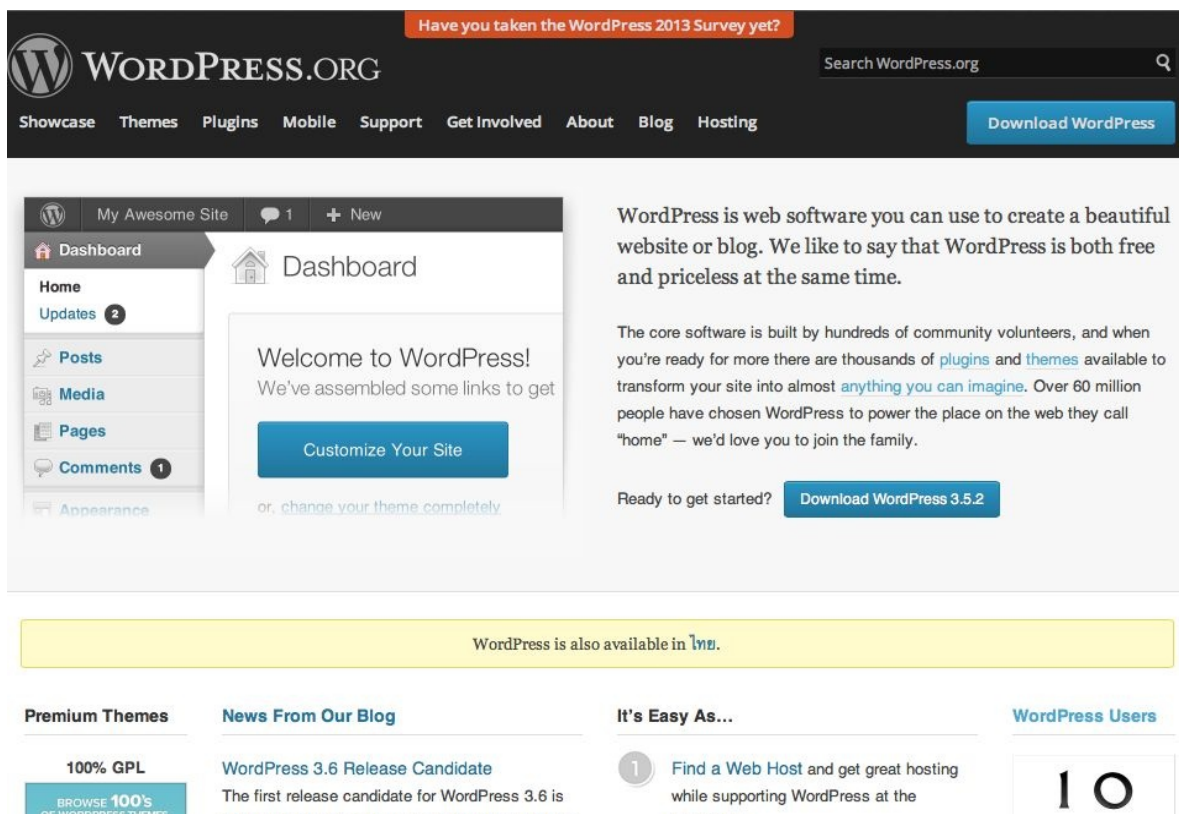
So, If you want the full power of WordPress, WordPress.org is clearly your choice.
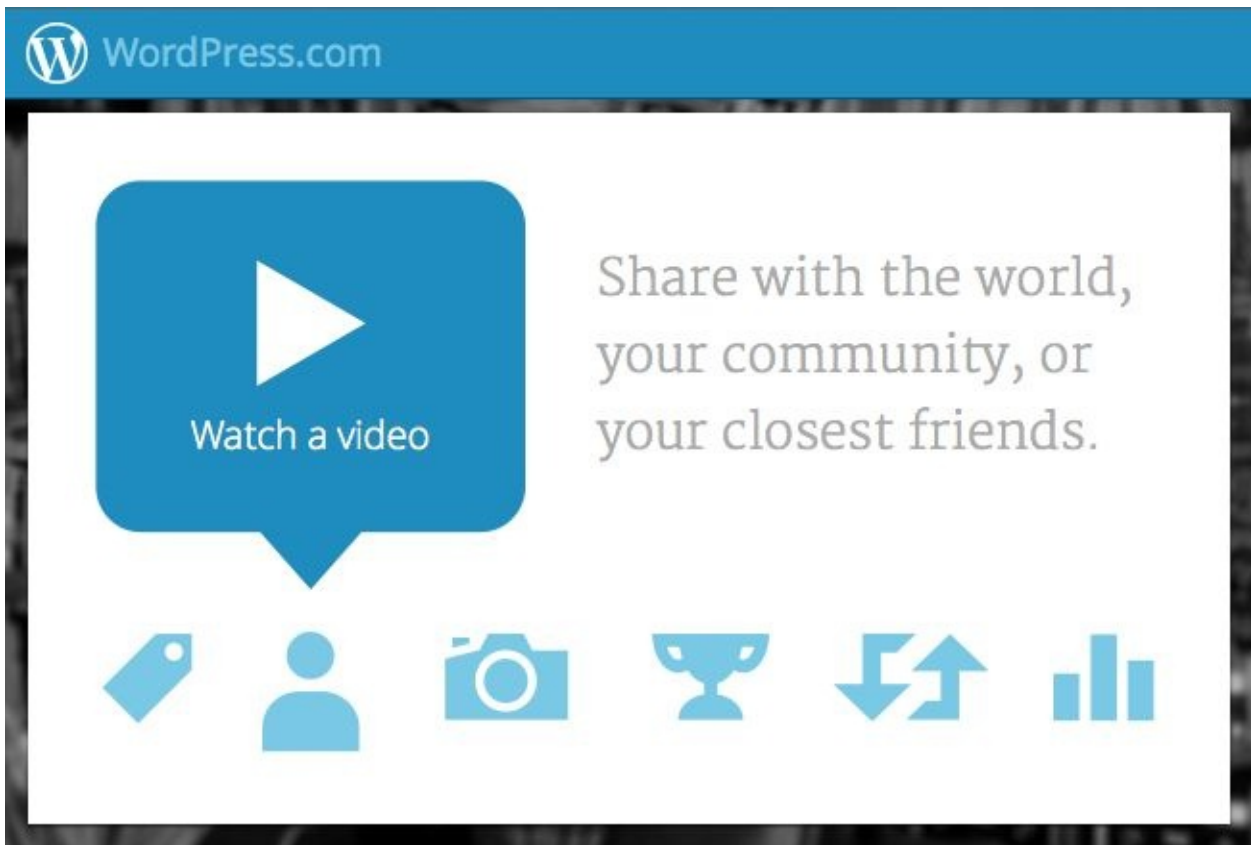
Why do you need to know this?

So when you Google (or Bing) to find help, you'd get the right answer for the right platform you're using.
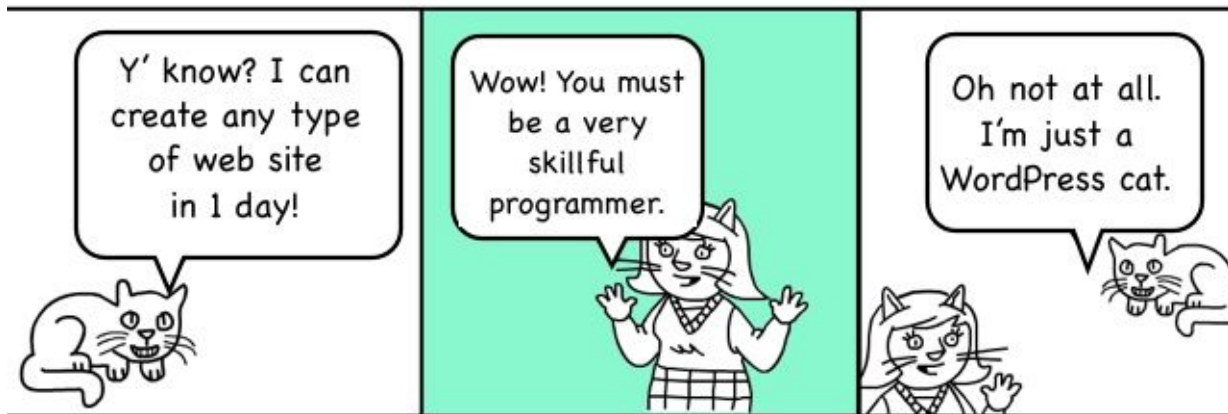
Trust me they are not the same when it comes to troubleshooting.

WordPress is Anything

So, is WordPress a blog or a web site? The line between them are now very thin. To most people nowadays, they are the same thing.
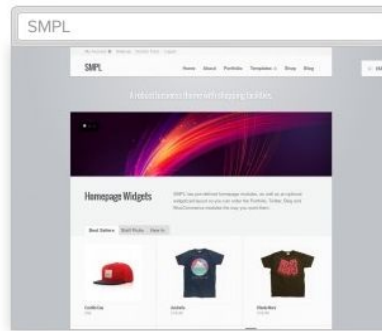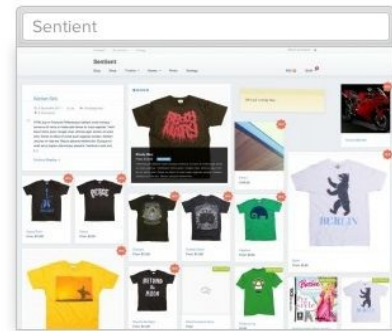
Whether it's the cnn.com, gizmodo or engadgets site? That's right, web site or blogs all use WordPress.

WordPress allows us to build a complex or professional web site in a day without skills of a web developer language: HTML, PHP, CSS etc.

And the reality is you can make any type of web site with WordPress too.

WordPress site can be transformed into any type of web site you want. You can morph your site from a tiny blog to a professional classified web site in seconds by installing and activating a WordPress template package called "Theme".
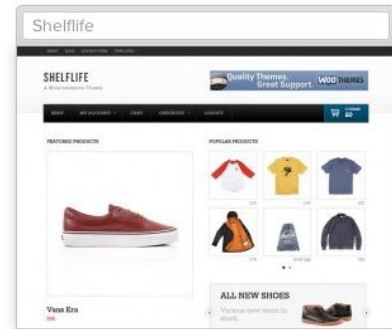
If you want an e-commerce site but don't want to take another year to learn Magento, Zencart, Joomla etc., all it takes is an e-commerce theme in WordPress.

Just search for a WordPress e-commerce theme (Free or Paid) with the functionalities you need, install it and activate. Done.

Or may be you want a magazine blog? news blog? or online web directory, classified, portfolio, social network site…you name it. WordPress can transform into any site, it's just a question finding the right theme.

More about theme in chapter 6.

Trouble with WordPress

 Before we're getting into how it works. You should be aware of a few issues and prepare to solve them.

However, what I'm about to tell you might be a little too advanced. Don't worry, you can come back to it later.

There are 2 things which expand your WordPress capability – they are 'Theme' and 'Plugin'. **These two can give you great benefit as well as errors. Read more about theme and plugin.**

In the customization process (if you want to do at all) you will be spending most time and these 2 things the most that usually ruin your site in instant if you're not careful.

Theme and plugin are made of .php files. So, it won't be that out-of-this-world to get errors once in a while.

Errors or bugs could cause the compatibility problem between them as well as to your

WordPress core system. Results in your site not loading properly.

Therefore, keep your eyes on newly installed plugin or theme and when you make a new setting for anything, so when error occur you know which one to undo, deactivate or delete.

Anyway, here are most common issues that you may face working with WordPress:

Most Frequently Issues

1. The more plugins you activated the more chance of technical problem you may run into.

Plugin can also slow down your site loading time. So find the theme that provide the features you want is usually better than adding another plugin.

2. Take as much time try to find the theme that best suit your needs, don't settle too easily. Trust me, editing theme's php files isn't that fun for non-programmer.

A great theme eliminate 95% of the customization work load. (Read more about how to choose a perfect theme in Part 5)

3. Buying paid themes and plugins is not just about the look and function but also about the support, buy highest rating stuff from a trusted company or site is your best bet.

4. Avoid as much customization into the php files as possible if you're not a coder. You could bring the whole site down.

In terms of Google ranking and user experience, when the site is down over 1-2 days, that's when all your business would be ruined and might not be able to bring it back forever.

5. Technology is useless without content. Finding great content ideas should be your first priority always. Tweaking your theme and finding plugins can wait.

6. Press the wrong button and cause your site to not load or error. If they are plugins or theme settings, you can just click back button on your browser and re-do it.

Usually this will work but if not, you need to override it by deleting recently plugins or theme. Or reset the whole thing if it's the core setting that broke.

Read about 'Reset', and delete the theme chapter 5 and plugin in chapter 6.

WARNING: A perfect site takes time, it's better to tweak as you go and don't try to perfect it all at once.
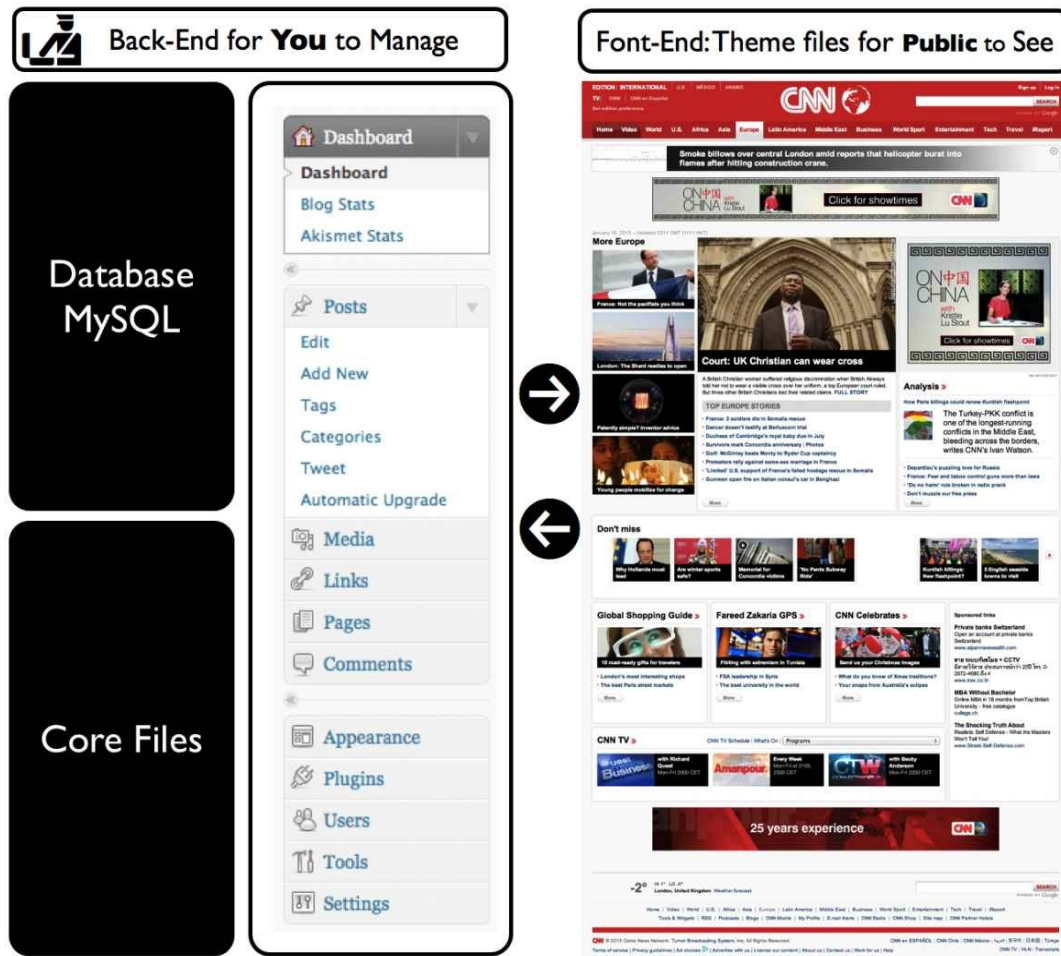
Remember?

"If you set your bar at "Amazing," It's awfully difficult to start."

CHAPTER TEN
2 - HOW WORDPRESS WORKS

Anatomy of WordPress

I know it can be confusing looking at WordPress as a whole the first time. However, it helps to know that there are only 2 sides in WordPress:

Back-end vs. Front-end

1. BACK-END

To me back-end is everything behind the scene that my web visitor don't care much to see. It is where the admin and content editor publish content and manage or control the site (That's you).

The back-end includes:

1. WordPress Management Panel - as lighting switches in your house

2. WordPress core files - as the structure of your house

3. WordPress database - as the cabinet in your house to keep things

First you login to access your admin panel

The Admin Panel

Behind the login and the front-end, you're entering into the WordPress management control panel. This is where you get to control everything from setting switches to content publication. And to have a great site just the way you want – control is everything.
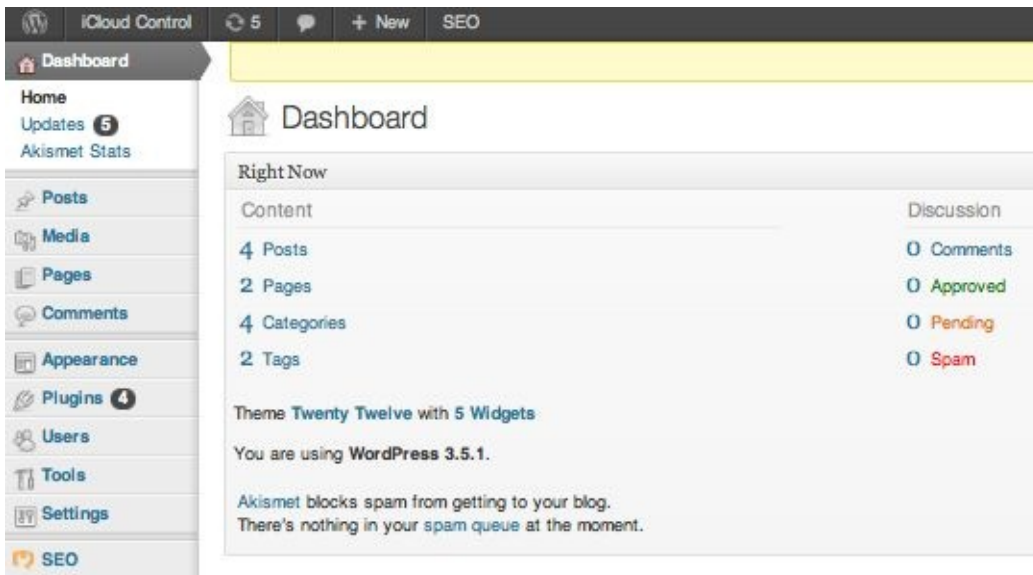

2. FRONT-END

To me, what web visitors see is the font-end, the template or theme. Therefore, when you're looking at your WordPress site, you don't really see WordPress, but it's more like you're looking at a WordPress theme.

Theme is made up of .php files, each of which call up specific element that appear each of your page.

Those theme files all stored in the theme folder, which you'll find in wp-content/themes in your WordPress installed folder. More about theme later.

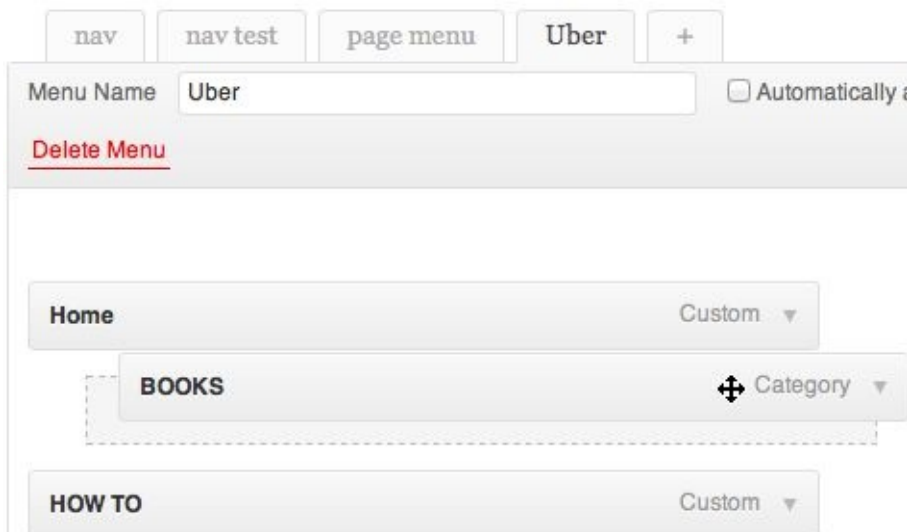The WordPress installer package comes built-in with 2 basic free themes to choose from:
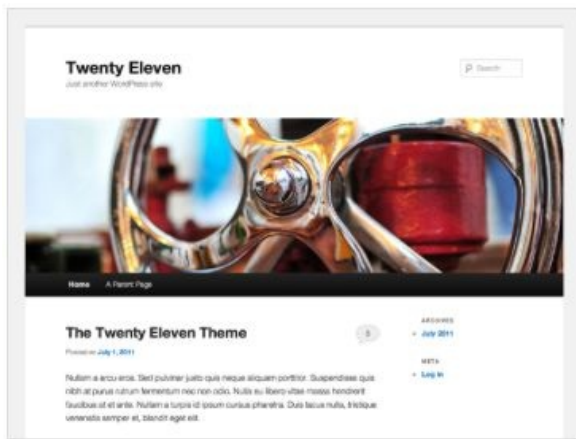
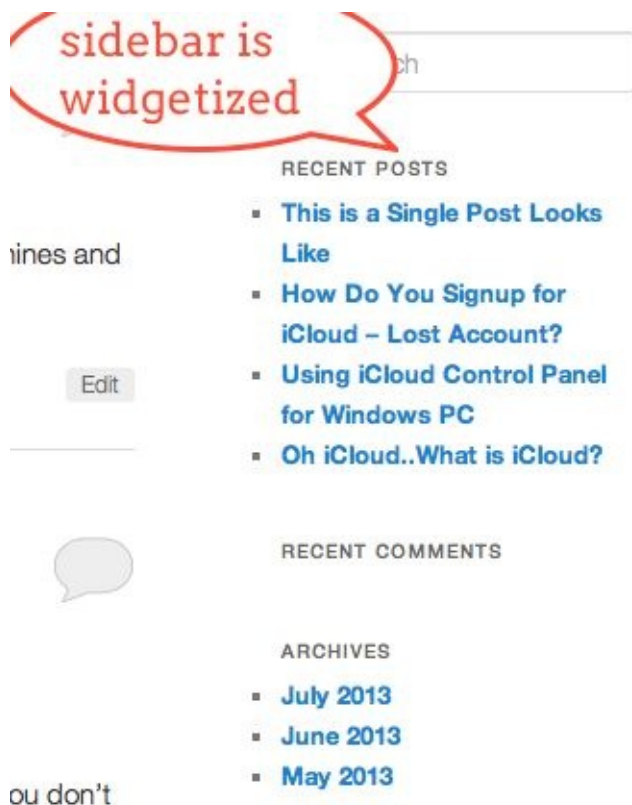**WordPress with no theme installed, it would not working at all.**

The Magic Widgets

Sidebar is very important for users to navigate your site as well as your main navigator menu.
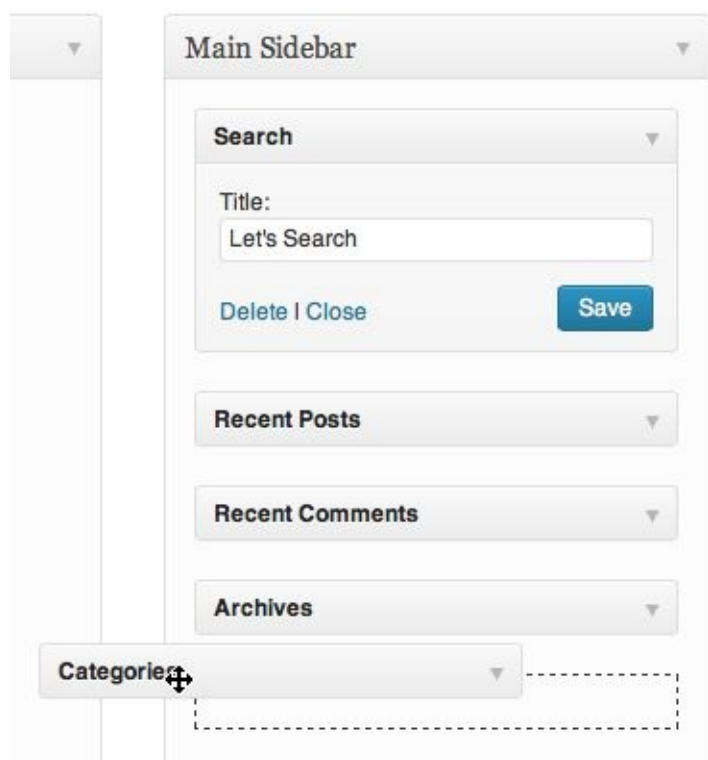
Widget is another cool feature in WordPress. As default installation, you can decorate your sidebar elements (Appearance > Widgets) and your navigator menu (Appearance > Menus) with a drag of a mouse.


MENU: Appearance > Widgets

sidebar is
widgetized

ch

ines and

Edit

ou don't

RECENT POSTS

- This is a Single Post Looks
  Like
- How Do You Signup for
  iCloud – Lost Account?
- Using iCloud Control Panel
  for Windows PC
- Oh iCloud..What is iCloud?

RECENT COMMENTS

ARCHIVES

- July 2013
- June 2013
- May 2013

"WordPress widgets" let's you add, move elements to your sidebar visually and easily. Some themes and plugins may provide additional sidebar elements for your site, this widgets drag and drop feature should come in handy for you.

Main Sidebar

Search

Title:
Let's Search

Delete I Close   Save

Recent Posts

Recent Comments

Archives

Categories

From within your WordPress blog's admin control panel, through the use of client-side scripting languages; Ajax and JavaScript, users can "click and drag" certain sidebar

elements and rearrange them to meet their ideal sidebar setup.

These elements include the blog search box, links, pages, meta (containing admin login links, RSS feed links), categories, most recent posts and text-box elements.
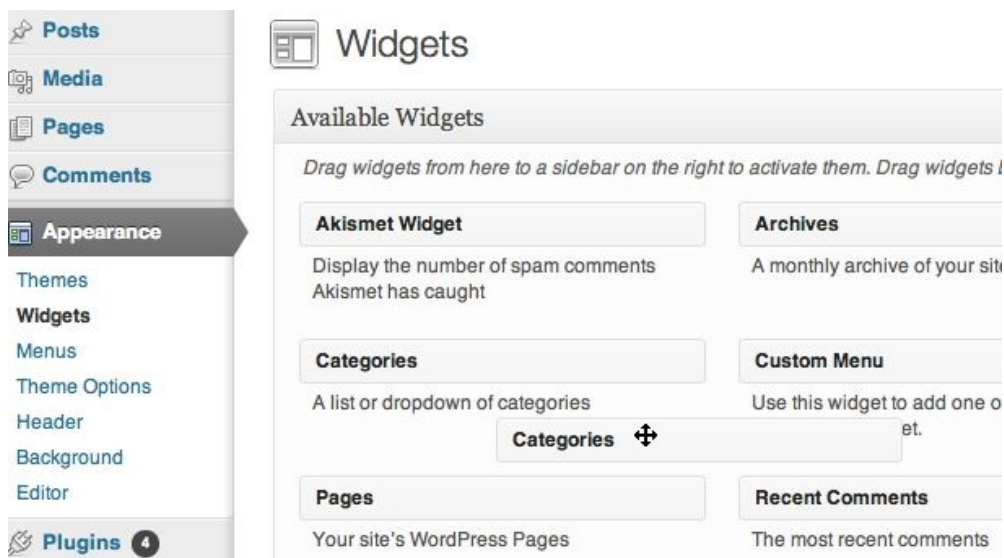
Add-ons & Widgets

Today, nearly all up-to-date WordPress themes are widget ready. And also many plugins are made to work with widgets too.

A good example plugin: Flexi-Widget plugin give users more freedom to configure and control the pages widget on any widget ready WordPress theme.

Meaning, instead of having to modify code like in the sidebar.php file to show something on your site – let say, a sidebar, you only need to go to the 'Widgets' menu under 'Appearance' to get started.

Next, click on the desired element to add it to the sidebar or re-arrange the elements in any widget ready theme as seen in the previous image.

Good & Bad of Widgetized Themes

Some paid themes have widgetized the look & feel for the whole site layout (e.g. Headwaytheme.com and PageLines.com). They're called "Drag & Drop" platform themes.

Drag and Drop platform lets you move things around and not just the sidebar but every

element you see on every page.

But don't waste your time looking for widgetized theme like that unless you have a web interior design skills.

It's not always good to be able to move things around freely because if you don't have the designer's head, you would end up with an ugly page. For most of us, choosing a best looking theme and edit just a little is a smarter choice.

Focus on your content and the simplicity first. Not the amazing features to impress yourself and friends.

Wordpress Package

WordPress, like any software, it comes in a package consists of files and may be some folders with more files. For WordPress, it speaks in php language so the files are mostly .php files, the rest are the component files like image files and so on.

Files that made up WordPress site can be categorized into 2 set:

1. Core files

WordPress.zip that you can download from WordPress.org home page, after the installation the files would look like this:
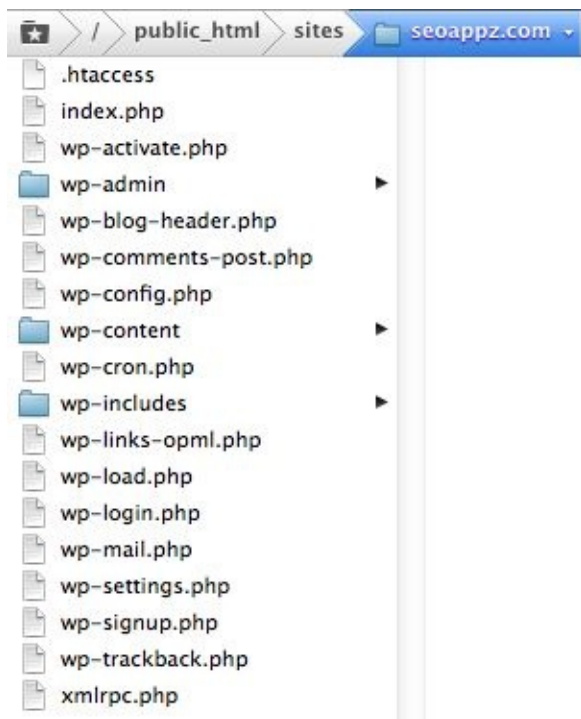
Notice the folder of the domain name (seoappz.com) is the root folder of your WordPress files.

You can install WordPress in any folder under your domain name. So then, if the files are located in different directory, you need to browser to that folder to be able to see your site. For example, a sub directory: seoappz.com/blog or a sub domain blog.seoappz.com

(I hate sub domain, it's just lame and old fashion nobody uses it anymore).

2. Theme files

Why is this template system files important to mention? Because WordPress can't live without this template system files to show up as a web site in the front-end.

In other words, without a theme package in your WordPress would not work at all.

Theme is a set of .php files comes in a folder just like WordPress.

As mentioned, there are 2 free themes come in default with WordPress installer package: "Twentyeleven" and "Twentytwelve". These theme folders can be found in /wp-content/themes/.
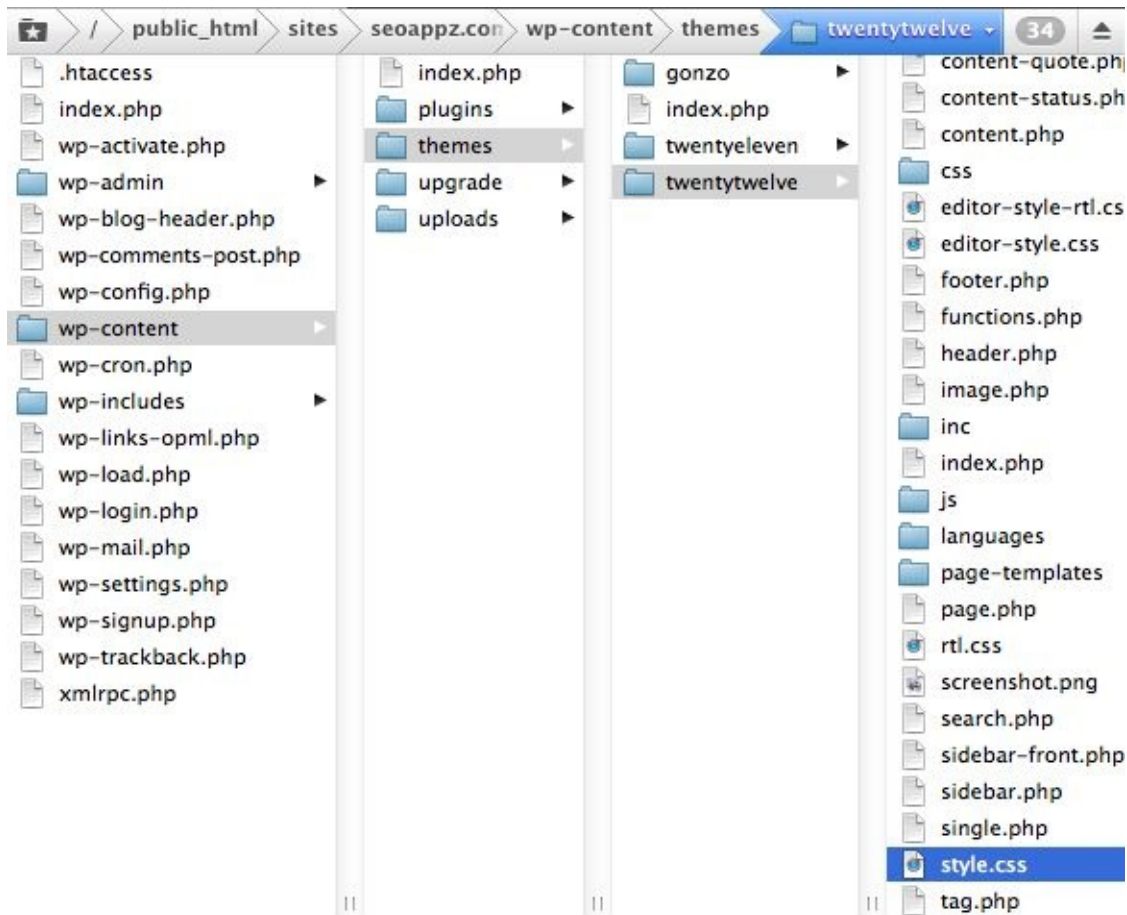
If you go the default theme folder (wp-content/themes/default), you should see many PHP files (called template file) and a stylesheet (style.css) – both made up a theme.

The folder /themes is where you add or delete multiple or single theme directly. You can also install theme in different manner, the easier way. More about theme read chapter 6.

Working with Files

To work with WordPress sometimes you need to act like a file manager. You need to know they are to be able to manage them.
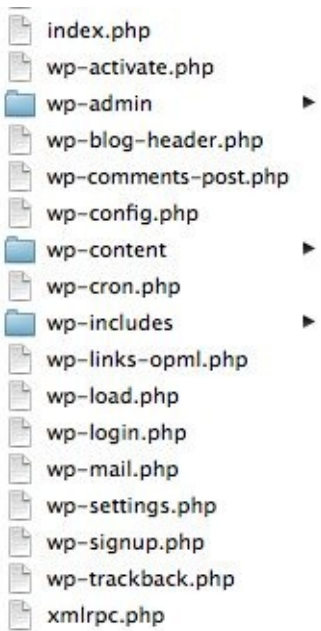
To access your WordPress files you have 2 choices:

    1.   Your cPanel file manager (this is very fast when upload and download large files)

    2.   FTP software like FileZilla – I use Transmit for Mac (this is very slow method but allow more multi-file and desktop drag and drop managing)

Some people don't need to get into these at all since they can do everything under WordPress admin interface like theme and plugin installation and media file management.

But when things go wrong, that's when you'd need to turn to these file managing methods.

The WordPress files

There are 3 folders in WordPress.zip package. The one you need to keep an eye for is /wp-content.

The other 2 folders (wp-admin and wp-includes) are parts of the core system which will be replaced when upgrade, just like when you upgrade your software – and /wp-content is like the /document folder where you keeps your own stuff like documents for download (like company pdf, your free software), image files and so on.

WARNING: Apart from /wp-content, DON'T DELETE any files or folders under the root domain or WordPress will not work.

You may ask, why can't I keep the document else where?

First, for all media files you add to your content, the default location would be in /wp-content/upload (it will create this folder for you automatically after you have added a media file).

Imagine you have ran your site for a year, this 'upload' folder would filled with lots of media files, images and so on. So, if you accidentally deleted this folder – god helps you.

Secondly – Yes, you can keep the files elsewhere too but as long as you remember to back up and the folder you created to keep your own stuff resides in your domain name root folder, and you can call the folder whatever you want too.

Anything to make it easier for you and WordPress to back up within the root. It's the ease for backing up and migration.

All back up plugins I know, back up from the top, the root folder down to the sub folders under it and nothing outside the root.

And talking about working with files, when you need to upload or delete files on to your site like a theme or a plugin. The folder you're looking for is:

/wp-content

**This is where you keep your stuff (plugins, images and themes):**
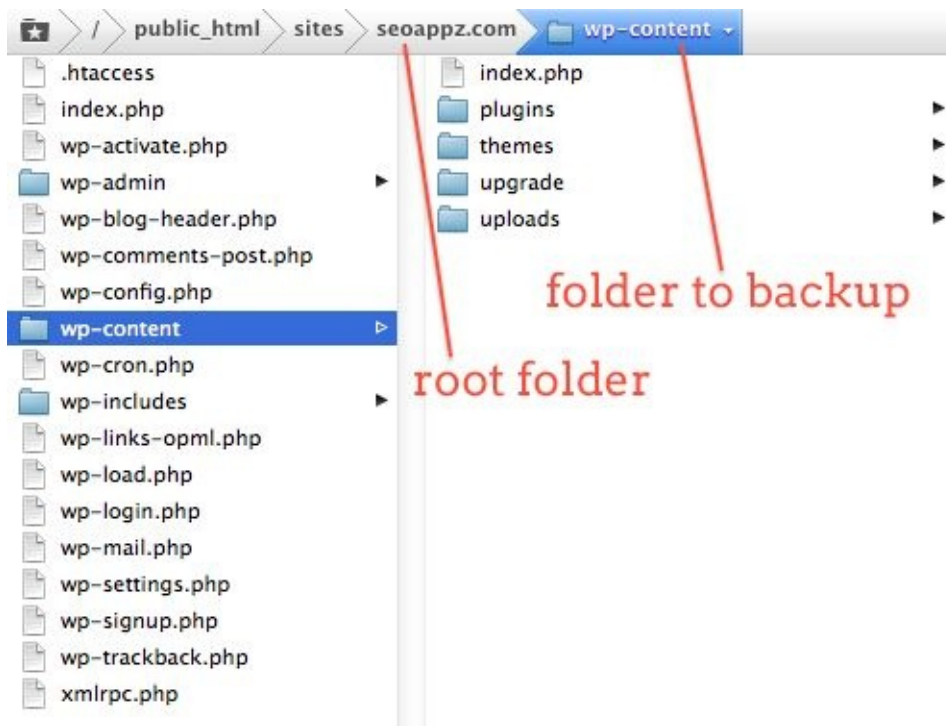
5 Web Visitor Views

This is how your web visitors see your site. WordPress allows total 5 user views for users to find the content on your site.

The design of the layout for each of 5 following views, of course, depends on the theme you're using and how you'd customize it.

1) **The Home Page** - A typical WordPress theme shows a list of blog posts and a sidebar to navigate the site on home page.
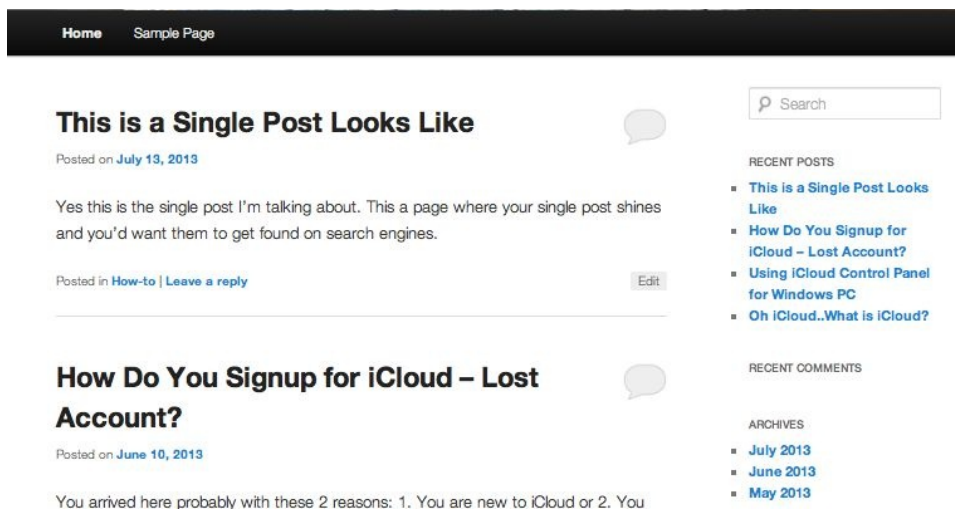
2) Single Posts - A single post is the web page that visitor usually find you on search engine or land on. It's a dedicated page for each blog post where it has post published date indicator and comment box (see next image):
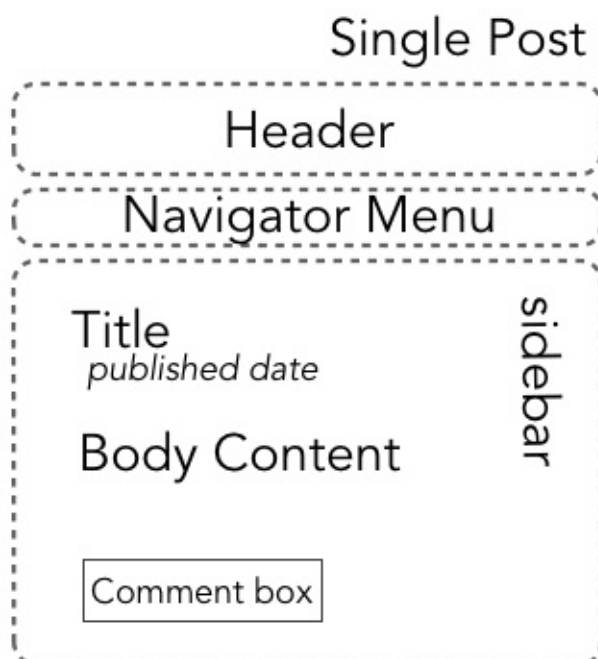
3) Static Pages - This is the static page like in the 90's. It's the set-and-forget content section: About us, Contact us, FAQ etc. It doesn't have publication date and the default setting won't display the comment box.

Then again, what kind of web site owner would want anyone to come and give comments about their FAQ or Contact Us page?

Page

Header

Navigator Menu

Title

Body Content

sidebar
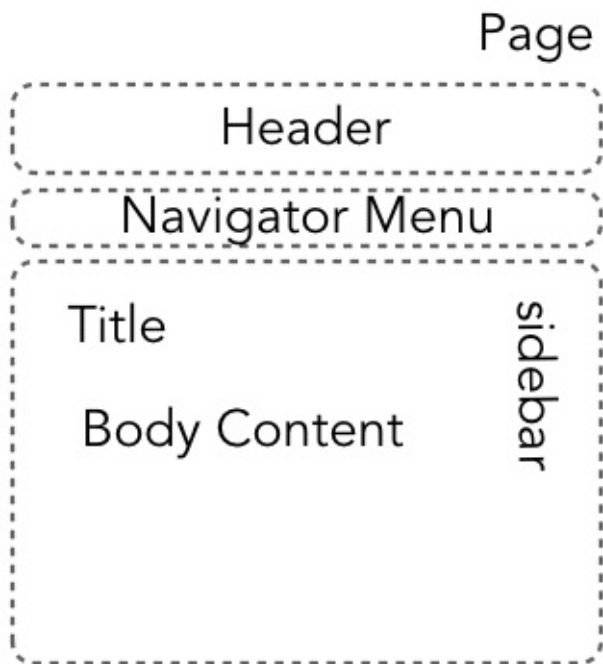
4) **Search Results** - User search in your site's search box and this page is the result page that displays a list or summary of posts in your site that match your query.

5) **Archive** - Shows series of posts by month and year. So, readers can choose to go back to your old posts quickly and easily. This can be show in sidebar if you want or not at all by activating the widget.

4 Steps to a Pro Site

I'm not talking about the content just yet. This is about get your site ready for the content. And to create a professional site using WordPress, **there are only these 4 steps:**

Install → Basic Settings → Get/ Set a Theme → Customize Theme

That's right. That's all there is to it, to have a WordPress site ready to publish your content to the world.

After that it's the categorization of your content and start publish which we will be cover one by one in this book starting from the next chapter.