

SEO Course

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What is SEO?

- SEO stands for “search engine optimization.” It’s the practice of increasing both the quality and quantity of website traffic, as well as exposure to your brand, through non-paid (also known as "organic") search engine results.



Search engine



- Search engines are answer machines. They scour billions of pieces of content and evaluate thousands of factors to determine which content is most likely to answer your query.
- Search engines do all of this by discovering and cataloguing all available content on the Internet (web pages, PDFs, images, videos, etc.) via a process known as “crawling and indexing,” and then ordering it by how well it matches the query in a process we refer to as “ranking.”

White hat vs black hat SEO



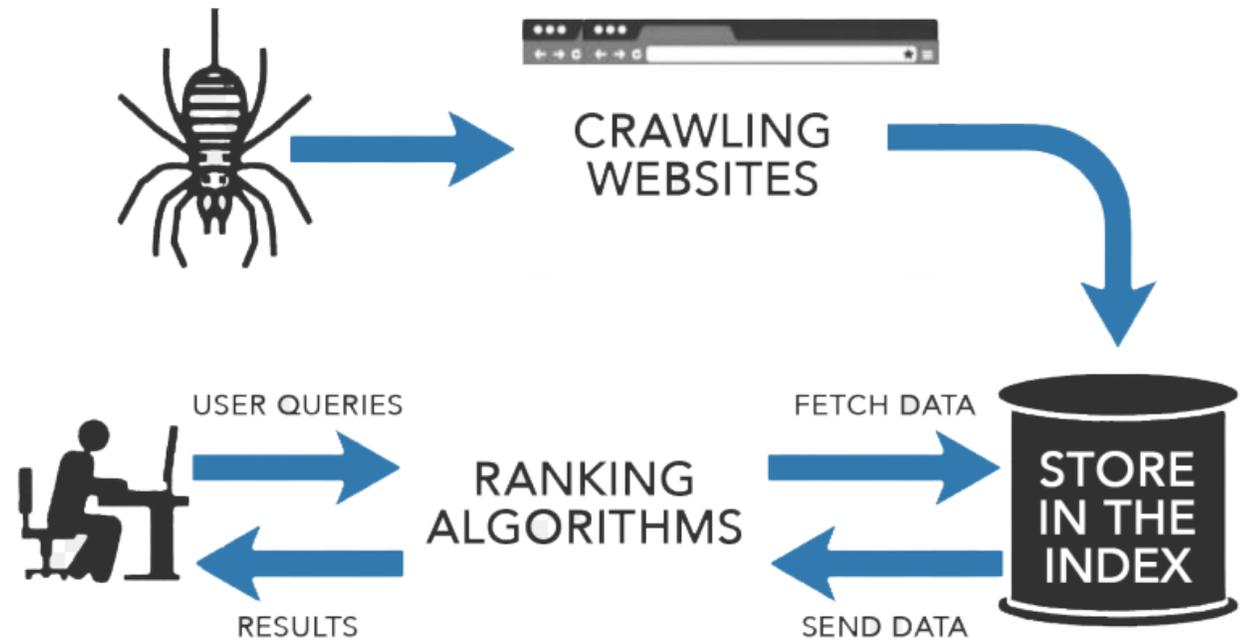
- "White hat SEO" refers to SEO techniques, best practices, and strategies that abide by search engine rule, its primary focus to provide more value to people.
- "Black hat SEO" refers to techniques and strategies that attempt to spam/fool search engines. While black hat SEO can work, it puts websites at tremendous risk of being penalized and/or de-indexed (removed from search results) and has ethical implications.

HOW SEARCH ENGINES WORK: CRAWLING, INDEXING, AND RANKING

- **Crawling:** Scour the Internet for content, looking over the code/content for each URL they find.
- **Indexing:** Store and organize the content found during the crawling process. Once a page is in the index, it's in the running to be displayed as a result to relevant queries.
- **Ranking:** Provide the pieces of content that will best answer a searcher's query, which means that results are ordered by most relevant to least relevant.

What is search engine crawling?

- **crawling** is the discovery process in which search engines send out a team of robots (known as crawlers or spiders) to find new and updated content. Content can vary — it could be a webpage, an image, a video, a PDF, etc. — but regardless of the format, content is discovered by links.



Robots.txt

What is a search engine index?

- Search engines process and store information they find in an index, a huge database of all the content they've discovered and deem good enough to serve up to searchers.



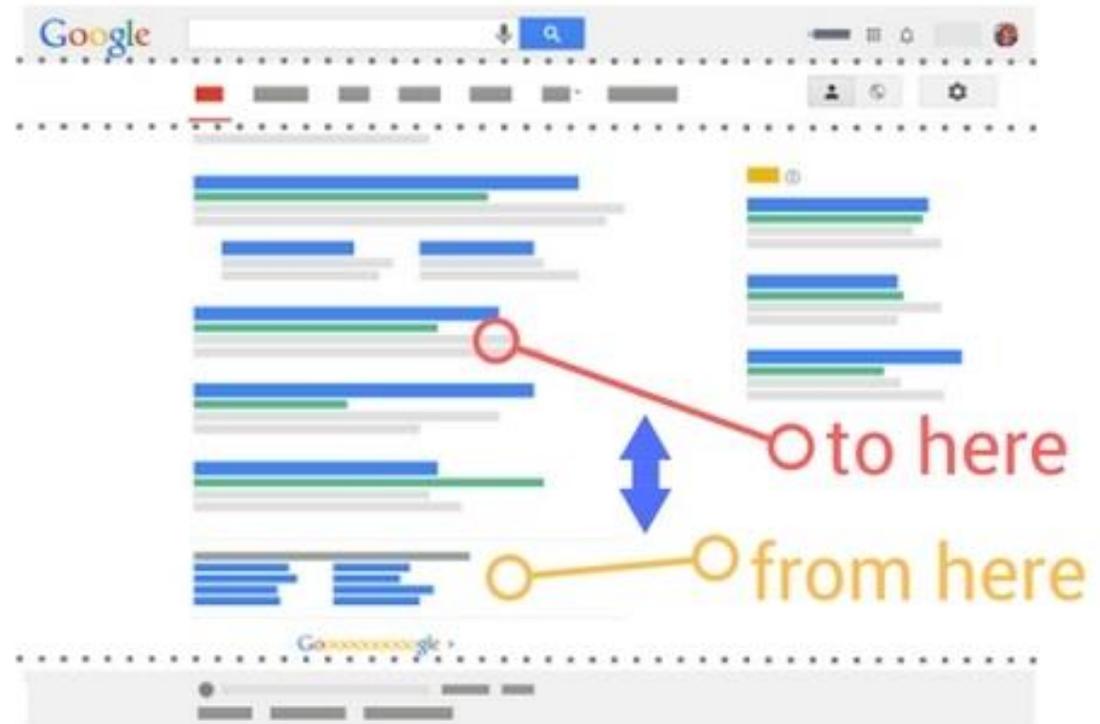
"site:yourdomain.com",

Indexing Problems

- Your site is brand new and hasn't been crawled yet.
- Your site isn't linked to from any external websites.
- Your site's navigation makes it hard for a robot to crawl it effectively.
- Your site contains some basic code called crawler directives that is blocking search engines.
- Your site has been penalized by Google for spammy tactics.

Search engine ranking

- When someone performs a search, search engines scour their index for highly relevant content and then orders that content in the hopes of solving the searcher's query. This ordering of search results by relevance is known as ranking. In general, you can assume that the higher a website is ranked, the more relevant the search engine believes that site is to the query.



Engagement metrics: correlation, causation, or both?

- **Clicks** (visits from search)
- **Time on page** (amount of time the visitor spent on a page before leaving it)
- **Bounce rate** (the percentage of all website sessions where users viewed only one page)
- **Pogo-sticking** (clicking on an organic result and then quickly returning to the SERP to choose another result)

SERP features

- Paid advertisements
- Featured snippets
- People Also Ask boxes
- Local (map) pack
- Knowledge panel
- Sitelinks

Localized search

When it comes to localized search results, Google uses three main factors to determine ranking:

- Relevance
- Distance
- Prominence

KEYWORD RESEARCH

Keyword research provides you with specific search data that can help you answer questions like:

- What are people searching for?
- How many people are searching for it?
- In what format do they want that information?

CONTENT IS KING !

- Good
- Clear
- Relevant

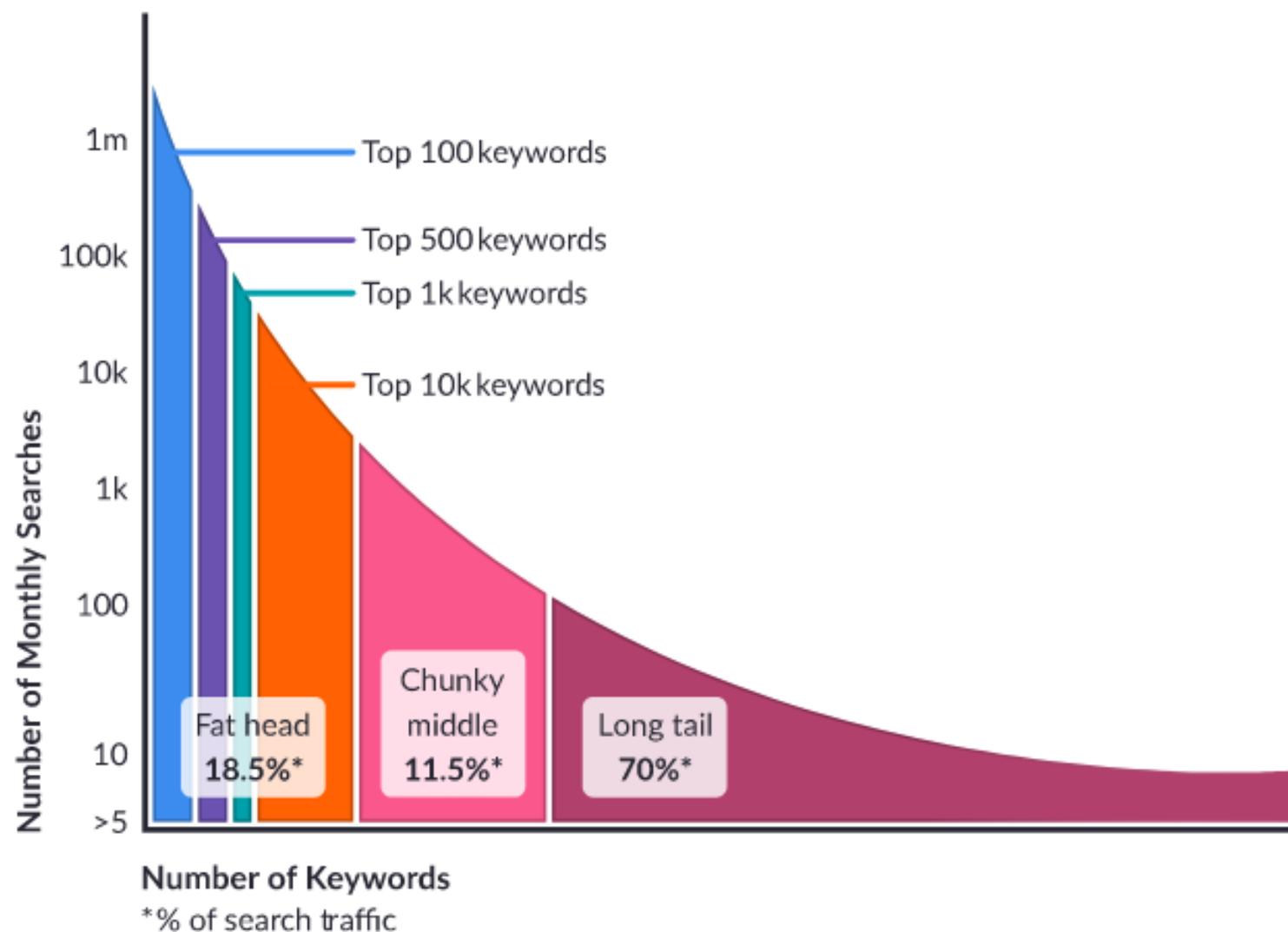


Before keyword research

- What types of Products are people searching for?
- Who is searching for these terms?
- When are people searching for Products?
 - Are there seasonality trends throughout the year?
- How are people searching for Products?
 - What words do they use?
 - What questions do they ask?
 - Are more searches performed on mobile devices?
- Why are people seeking the Products?
- Where are potential customers located — locally, nationally, or internationally?



The Search Demand Curve



Getting strategic with search volume

- Keywords by competitor
- Keywords by season
- Keywords by region
- [Moz Keyword Explorer](#)
- [Google Keyword Planner](#)
- [Google Trends](#)
- [AnswerThePublic](#)
- [SpyFu Keyword Research Tool](#)



ON-PAGE SEO



Creating your content



1. Applying your keyword research

- Survey your keywords and group those with similar topics and intent. Those groups will be your pages, rather than creating individual pages for every keyword variation.
- If you haven't done so already, evaluate the SERP for each keyword or group of keywords to determine what type and format your content should be. Some characteristics of ranking pages to take note of:
 - Are they image- or video-heavy?
 - Is the content long-form or short and concise?
 - Is the content formatted in lists, bullets, or paragraphs?
- Ask yourself, “What unique value could I offer to make my page better than the pages that are currently ranking for my keyword?”

2. Low-value tactics to avoid

Your web content should exist to answer searchers' questions, to guide them through your site, and to help them understand your site's purpose. Content should not be created for the purpose of ranking highly in search alone. Ranking is a means to an end, the end being to help searchers. If we put the cart before the horse, we risk falling into the trap of low-value content tactics.

- Thin content
- Duplicate content
- Cloaking
- Keyword stuffing
- Auto-generated content

Other optimizations your pages need

- Header tags
- Internal links
- Link accessibility
- Anchor text
- Link volume
- Redirection
- Image optimization

How to choose which image format to use:

- If your image requires animation, use a GIF.
- If you don't need to preserve high image resolution, use JPEG (and test out different compression settings).
- If you do need to preserve high image resolution, use PNG.
 - If your image has a lot of colors, use PNG-24.
 - If your image doesn't have a lot of colors, use PNG-8.

Title tags

```
<head> <title>Example Title</title></head>
```

What makes an effective title tag?

- Keyword usage
- Length(50–60 characters)
- Branding

Meta descriptions

```
<head> <meta name="description" content="Description of page here."/> </head>
```

What makes an effective meta description?

- Relevance
- Length (150–300)

URL structure: Naming and organizing your pages

- Clear page naming
- Page organization
- URL length
- Keywords in URL
- Static URLs
- Hyphens for word separation
- Case sensitivity
- Geographic modifiers in URLs
- Protocols: HTTP vs HTTPS

Best Practices

- **Include clear title tags**
- Create unique title tags for each page
- Accurately describe the page's content
- Use brief, but descriptive titles
- **Provide a Meta Description tag**
- Use unique description tags for each page
- Summarize the key information per page
- Write high quality and concise descriptions
- **Fill in the image and video blanks**
- Add descriptive captions
- Use Alt Tags
- Use descriptive file names
- Provide a transcript or summary of video content
- **Clearly structure your URL**
- Use descriptive URLs, with words, not numbers and symbols
- Use a directory structure for your URL
- **Ensure a cohesive site structure**
- Develop a directory structure schematic for your site, starting with the home page
- Ensure there is no orphaned content on your site

TECHNICAL SEO

