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**So What Is SEO?**

**By Darryl Antonio**

SO WHAT IS SEO?

And more importantly why do you need it?

I've taken the liberty to break down this white paper into a few digestible sections. Please feel free to scamper across to the most relevant section that interests you

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SO, WHAT IS SEO?

SEO or to use its' full acronym is Search Engine Optimisation. Lots has been said and written all over the net on this extremely demanding topic by every self-effacing Marketing expert today

Indeed, I'm sure if you trawl through a search on Google for the term SEO you will probably find countless entries on the subject and herein lies both the explanation and the ensuing problem

Confronted by a vast number of websites to pursue one's search further, an average searcher will click

## So What Is SEO?

on perhaps 20 websites to find what he/she is looking for at best

So what happens if your website is ranked from say 30 or 40 or a 100 upwards? The chances are you will be one of the very lucky ones if your website receives any traffic worth mentioning at all

SEO at its very core if applied correctly is designed to rank a website/webpage, for a pre-defined set of keywords, at the very top of the search engine thereby ensuring that a particular website has more chance of being clicked on than that of its' competitor's ranked below it

This then should mean that a website having been thus optimised naturally rises to the top of the search rankings for those specific keywords. Alas if only life was so simple!

Notice, I did say if correctly applied but how do you know what to optimise and how much to do?

Badly cobbled together webpages with too much optimisation or indeed too little unfortunately end up being either buried in the deep recesses of the results or get shelved by the search engines altogether

### WHY IS IT SO IMPROTANT?

Imagine that you have a shop selling ice-cream on a very busy high street full of other ice-cream sellers, each one offering pretty much the same thing that you are

How do you go about attracting customers over your competitors. The answer is that in the real world it is much harder to jostle for the number 1 spot without spending a fortune on advertising, marketing and company branding

Fortunately, in cyberspace given the same scenario the playing field is somewhat easier and a whole lot cheaper too

The secret is getting your webpages right the first time around so that you can take full advantage of table topping rankings and great traffic as a result

But don't worry if you haven't enjoyed much success with your website to date, existing webpages can be tweaked and manipulated to become more search engine and visitor friendly

On page and off page SEO techniques can be applied to catapult your rankings to the very top of the free search engines bringing much needed traffic and more importantly an increase in revenue

Finally, there is also another knock on effect to better rankings but more on that at a later date...

### THE 3 THINGS THAT YOU MUST DO?

## So What Is SEO?

This section applies to every website owner be it well-established or a fledgling start up

1. Evaluate – Always put yourself in the shoes of your potential site visitor. Looking at it from their perspective ask yourself these questions: Does your website/webpage have the necessary content to attract and keep their attention? Is your message clear, well thought-out? Do you have a strong call to action?

At first this may seem a rather difficult or tedious process, but I always advise my clients to spend some time on it simply because even if you do enjoy top rankings it doesn't always necessarily follow that your sales will also increase as a result

In time however, this will become a part of your thinking process naturally and will stand you in good stead when you decide to launch a new product online or a new website etc;

The key here is to provide the client with what they came to your website for in the first place and in so doing stimulate their buying interest at the same time

2. Monitor – In cyberspace a lot can happen very quickly. I'm sure that almost everyone must be aware of utter havoc created by the Google Florida updates in November of last year

Just to quickly recap, Google started enforcing their guidelines and had grown tired of those website owners using "spammy optimization" techniques and having little or no real content

Google claimed that the change was all part of their continued efforts to improve their search engine results

Some people thought however that it was an over optimization penalty, others a bug perhaps. Whatever it was, Google had upset a lot of people in the process

Apparently, Google understands the fact that people's businesses rely on Google results. Craig Nevill-Manning, Google's Senior Research Scientist, said, for what it's worth, "I apologize for the roller coaster. We're aware that changes in the algorithm affect people's livelihoods. We don't make changes lightly."

Needless to say that the Florida update caught a good many search engine professionals and online business owners off guard demoting previously high-ranking sites and relegating them to the netherworld of Google's search results

The moral of this is to monitor your rankings constantly, do not attempt half-baked spammy optimisation techniques – instead fill your pages with real content and every so often go check out Google's ranking criteria

3. Adapt – The internet marketplace is great place to tap into an ever hungry world wide audience. However, what happens when things go wrong and sadly they sometimes do?

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Remember SARS or 9/11 and the ensuing fear of terrorism! It decimated the already sluggish travel industry at the time and while no one can predict these events or for that matter what lies ahead with any deal of accuracy it might help to have some contingency plans in mind

For instance, when the fear of international travel was at its' height some companies better prepared than others turned their marketing and their websites to promoting internal travel

Suddenly these companies had access to an hitherto untapped audience interest and as a result grew their customer database and better still increased brand loyalty

### WHO CAN YOU TRUST?

So, you've been spammed by innumerable so–say SEO "EXPERTS", all promising the holy grail in online marketing results for your website rankings

So, who do you trust?

As a rule of thumb it's always good to have a few key questions in mind before evaluating whether a company deserves your business or not such as:

- a. how long has the company been around for?
- b. who are their customers?
- c. are they happy for you to talk directly to their customers? (this will usually sort the wheat from the chaff!)
- d. the all important results – Can they supply proof of their claims?

And finally the clincher – ALWAYS FOLLOW YOUR GUT INSTINCT!

### WHAT CAN YOU REALISTICALLY EXPECT TO ACHIEVE?

With the right SEO techniques applied for both on page and off page factors, key selling pages can be turned around to rank highly in the search engines

More highly ranking pages will in turn bring in more unique visitors i.e. potential new customers and if nurtured correctly these new visitors/customers will go on to become loyal customers in the years ahead

Once these key pages begin to feature well, similar optimisation work can be done to subsidiary pages

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The idea is to get as many of your webpages to rank as highly as possible thereby spreadbetting your supply options, generating the all important increase in traffic and also acting as a counter against any unforeseen problems with search engine algorithm changes etc;

### CONCLUSION

In a nutshell therefore, your key pages must have valid content presented in a way that both engages and motivates your target market audience and backed-up by a strong call to action

Get this basic principle of SEO right and your search engine rankings will almost take care of themselves

The bottom line is: Content is what it is really all about from both your target market and a search engine perspective

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### **SEO – Search Engine Optimization You Can Do**

**By J. Ratliff**

#### **SEO – Search Engine Optimization You Can Do by J. Ratliff**

We all know what SEO is, and it seems like it has kind of an "executive" sound to it doesn't it? The truth is, thousands of webmasters spend millions of dollars every year on SEO services. Now, I am not discounting the importance of these services.

Indeed, SEO is very important not only to the big website portals, but to your website as well.

However, I do believe that a lot of the people who spend thousands annually, do so without needing to. I have done SEO work on a dozen websites for businesses, and about 20 of my own. My secret? It's all in the software.

If you have not checked out this software, I highly recommend it.

## So What Is SEO?

Internet Business Promoter

(IBP) for

short. I use it everyday, not only for my websites, but also for any SEO work I do.

It does costs around \$200, but it is worth every penny plus some.

Save money and do your own SEO work.

J. Ratliff is a webmaster, part time SEO guru, and affiliate guru. He has achieved certified SEO status from ExpertExam.



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