



JARGON BUSTER

Search Engine Optimisation



Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) is the process of making your site nice and easy for the likes of Google - and in turn your customers - to find you. But it's pretty jargon-heavy - here are the basics...

KEY TERMS



ALGORITHM

There are many factors that decide where your site should rank in the search engines in relation to others, and these are combined to make the algorithm. It's regularly changing to ensure only the best quality sites rank well.



ON-PAGE RANKING FACTORS

Any ranking factors which you can personally influence - content on your website, for example. Because it's easily tweaked by any web owner regardless of the site's quality, it only accounts for a small portion of the algorithm.



OFF-PAGE RANKING FACTORS

Any ranking factors which sit on other people's sites and are harder for you to control. A link to your site is the best example of this. Account for the vast majority of the algorithm.



ALT TEXT

Short for alternative text, this sits behind an image to tell a search engine what that image is. Used by screen readers for the visually impaired so they know what images are on a page. As with all 'on-page' factors, carries a small ranking benefit but is a must for accessibility.



ANCHOR TEXT

The clickable text of a link - for example "Read More". Should ideally give the visitor an idea of what will happen if that link is clicked.



SPIDER

The program that looks at your website's content - along with how many sites link to you - and decides where it should rank.



INTERNAL LINKS

Links from one page to another within your own site - for example, the Home page linking to the About Us page is an internal link.



EXTERNAL LINKS

These are links from another website to yours. Certain external links are a major ranking factor, while others (from a social media account, for example) do nothing more than send visitors.



META DESCRIPTION

The descriptive text that appears in search engine results. Should include the key term that the page is about - it's no longer a ranking factor, but is used as a call to action to get visitors to your site.



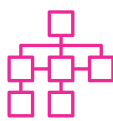
SEARCH ENGINE RESULTS PAGE (SERP)

Results that appear when you've searched for something. These can be standard results, adverts, maps, shopping items and more.



TITLE TAG

The title given to each page (eg, "Home"), which is usually shown as the blue clickable link in search results. As well as saying what the page is about, it's also a key on-page ranking factor and so should always be used.



XML SITEMAP

A complete list of website pages of your site. Especially important on large sites as it helps search engine spiders find all your pages and understand your site structure.

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