

Lead Generation Playbook

Search Engine Optimization



JOLT
DIGITAL

Jolt Digital®, December 2019

Note: The Lead generation playbook is not exhaustive and built to give you enough elements to start a campaign. However, at every stage there are more things to cover for which we would be happy to help you. Just reach out!
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Contents

| | |
|---------------------|----|
| Executive Summary | 3 |
| Introduction | 4 |
| 1. Plan | 5 |
| ■ On-site technical | 6 |
| ■ Content | 9 |
| ■ Link building | 13 |
| 2. Measure | 16 |
| 3. Optimize | 18 |
| ■ Best Practises | 18 |



Executive Summary

Since Google launched in 2000, it completely changed the way people find the relevant products.

93% of online experiences begin with a search engine. Therefore, if you want to attract online users, and execute successful lead generation campaigns, it is important to rank well when consumers start searching for your products.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is the foundation of marketing and deserves some time so you can rank well on natural search and drive users to your website for making them convert.

There are some principles to follow regarding SEO: onsite technical, content and link building. You need to be methodical and apply these principles one by one to see improvement on natural ranking. Content is one of the most important factors to improve SEO since it will provide internet users with the right experience they are looking for when they started entering their search query. Google will reward this above all. However, it doesn't mean you should leave out the technical part on the website, like title tags or mobile optimized pages or loading time or including the right keywords in the right place.

Google understands the value of sites by their authority. A link from another high value site is the clearest demonstration of trust. Getting other websites to recommend to their users to go and visit your page is a critical way to improve SEO.

Finally, create with your agency your measurement plan with the KPIs you are going to track and make sure you leverage tools like Google Analytics or Adobe Analytics to check these KPIs and how they improve overtime. It takes time to improve SEO and this means there will be a lot of optimizations that are required to see improvement.

Introduction

In this playbook we will focus on SEO which is one of the foundations of digital marketing and a key component of lead generation.

This guide has been written specifically for marketing practitioners in order to help them when using SEO in their lead generation campaigns.

The lead generation playbook is not exhaustive. It is built to give you enough elements to start a campaign. However, there are more things to cover for which we would be happy to help you. Just reach out!

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Why SEO is important for Lead Generation

SEO is the foundation of digital marketing. It is the first thing any marketer should look at, even if they don't run any paid campaigns driving to the website. Let's think about it for a minute.

83%¹ of links users click on search engines, are natural search links.

This means that your natural search or organic results are the most important part of what happens on search engines for a brand.

¹Bright edge

1. Plan



“

SEO can be overwhelming when you look at it for the first time. There are indeed, close to 200 different factors that will determine where you will be found on Google.

”

Recap of what SEO is

SEO is the name given to activity that attempts to improve a brand's organic search engine rankings.

SEO principles.

SEO can be overwhelming when you look at it for the first time. There are indeed, close to 200 different factors that will determine where you will be found on Google. Therefore, it is important to be thorough and follow the core principles of SEO. There are 3 principles.

1. On-site technical

For your content to be searchable, it must be easily accessible for Google. Technical SEO prevents errors which stop your content being crawled and indexed

2. Content

To rank well your content must be relevant to what people are searching for but also more engaging than the competition

3. Link building

Google understands the value of sites by their authority. A link from another high value site is the clearest demonstration of trust

Let's now look at each principle into details and understand what we should pay attention to.

On-site technical

There are few **technical elements** on your website that you should be aware of as they will **have a direct impact** on your SEO. Search engine bots will understand your website better if they understand its structure: from URL to text and images.

This means simplifying your URLs, which are the 'web addresses' of your web pages. It's ideal to make sure that every URL you use for each page of your site contains your business name.

In addition, you should consider the following:

- ✓ Keep your URLs as short, simple, relevant and accurate as possible
- ✓ Ensure each web page has its own unique URL
- ✓ Use 'speaking URLs,' which are URLs containing words rather than numbers. Even though URLs can include numbers and codes, it's best to use words that people can comprehend
- ✓ Use hyphens to separate words in your URL in order to improve user readability
- ✓ Avoid using underscores, spaces, or any other characters to separate words in a URL
- ✓ Always use lowercase letters where possible, as uppercase letters can cause SEO issues
- ✓ Your URLs should match the titles of your web pages where possible and feature keywords that are relevant to the page. Avoid using more than two or three keywords in your URL, as this can make your web page look spammy

Much like choosing keywords, effectively optimizing your website for keywords is a very important task. We will talk later about how to choose your keywords.

Where shall we incorporate keywords on the website?

Keywords will be added into the site content and HTML so when the search engine crawls your site, it will start to understand quickly what it is about and be able to link it to users' search queries.

Here are few things to keep in mind when you add your keywords.

- Don't optimize each page without looking at the other pages. You need to look at your keyword targeting by taking all pages into context. This will guard against any gaps or keyword cannibalization that can happen when you work on each page in silo
- Ensure you optimize your Title tags and Meta tags for users and Search engines

We can't insist enough that Title tags are very important to SEO: they help search engines understand what your page is about but also can be a determining factor in users clicking.

- ✓ Are your Title tags and Meta tags unique, highly descriptive and keywords focused and relevant to the content of the page?
- ✓ For Title tags, have you placed target keywords at the beginning?
- ✓ Don't stuff multiple keywords into the Title tag. It's better to create a concise Title tag, rather than cramming in several keywords
- ✓ Are your Title tags between 50-60 characters long including spaces and brand names at the end?
- ✓ Are your Meta tags description under 175 characters long with a clear call-to-action? E.g. 'shop now' or 'find out more today.'
- ✓ Use pipes, (usually found above the return key on your keyboard and look like '|') to separate important phrases. A good format of a title tag for a 'contact us' page might be, 'Contact Us | Important Keyword | Kuala Lumpur Window Cleaners'.
- ✓ Leave out words like and, if, then, but.

Mobile optimization.

On average 47%¹ of people use mobile to access internet and to search. Therefore, it is important, even more for us in APAC, to optimize the site for mobile devices for mobile organic search visibility and greater exposure.

Check if your page is mobile friendly and if there are no issues like loading time. You can check here: <https://search.google.com/test/mobile-friendly>



- ✓ Ensure text is readable, images are scaled correctly and navigation is easy from a mobile device
- ✓ Optimize the site speed for a fast and seamless mobile experience

Optimize the Sitemap to maximize crawlability and indexability on Search engines

A sitemap is a blueprint for a site. Google strongly recommends using sitemaps as a way to outline the organisation of the site's content and help crawlers recognize, acknowledge and index pages more efficiently for increased organic visibility.

A sitemap can also provide valuable metadata as it can inform crawlers when the page was last updated, how often the page is changed and the importance of the page relative to other pages on the site. Fresh content feeds crawlers and your overall ranking in search results

Check the following:

- ✓ The sitemap is reflective of all content and active pages on the site?
- ✓ No broken links (404 Error Pages) are listed in the sitemap?
- ✓ All redirects (permanent or temporary) are replaced with the correct URL they link to?

¹Source: Statcounter, January 2019

Content

To rank well your content must be relevant to what people are searching for but also more engaging than the competition.

In this section we will look at how we can ensure if your website's content is relevant to what people are searching for.

There are tools that you can use to find out what content users are interested in consuming in relation to your website/ content. This will help you inform your content topics but also the keywords you can use. There are many tools out there but some of the best tools to research topics for SEO are from Google itself.

Google Autocomplete

It is a great tool for finding the best variations of your main keyword phrase. Just type in the Google search box, and related terms will display in a drop-down list.

Google Searches related to

Google also offers a section at the bottom of Google search results called Google Searches related to. If you scroll down to the bottom of the search results, you'll receive up to 8 suggestions that are ideal to use for keyword variations in your content and keyword research.

Google People also ask

The People also ask section is another great free tool to use when beginning your keyword research. After you type in your keyword term in the Google search box, scroll down to see different variations of your keyword term. You can select the drop-down feature to expand the content.

Google Trends

With Google Trends, you can quickly view top stories or charts. And, you can search and compare specific keywords in three quick steps:

- ✓ Type in your keyword in the search box at the top
- ✓ Click compare, then type in your second keyword
- ✓ Adjust the dates if needed

Google Trends also helps you find country data and related queries which will help guide your keyword strategy.

Wordtracker's Free Basic Keyboard Lead

Wordtracker is a keyword tool specifically for SEO. Wordtracker reveals thousands of keywords and helps you build and manage keyword lists, and filter keywords for different pages of your website. The main features are available for free, but you can also access additional features with a paid plan.

Blogs

Having a Blog in your website is a great way to incorporate some content topics that are already searched therefore chances to appear when people are searching for them. However, ensure you also apply the on-site technical to the blog.

Why Content on your website and outside your website is important for SEO?

With all the free tools you now have at your disposal, you should have a good idea what people are interested in and what content topics and keywords you should cover on your website.

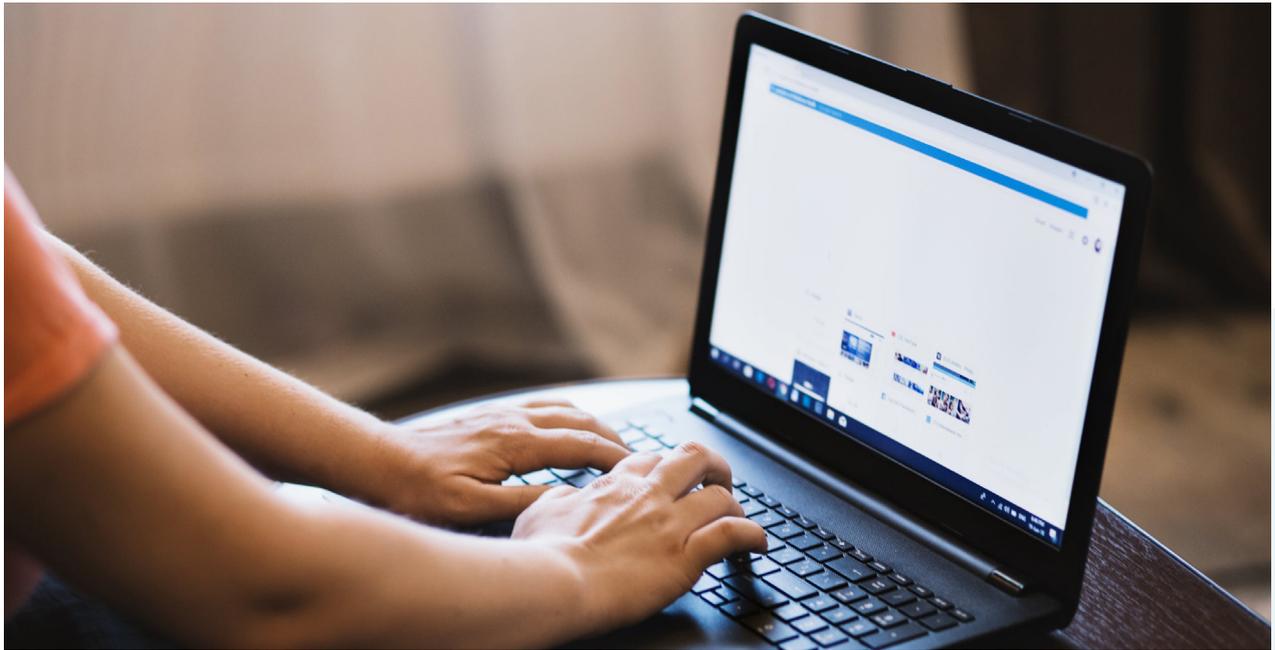
There are dozens of different types of digital content you can create.

Go and create the most relevant content on your website but don't forget Social media!

How to use social media for SEO

Facebook & Instagram

Search engines don't just crawl websites, they crawl Facebook and Instagram too.



And they take notice of what people are doing on their social networks – including what they click on. Ensuring your business (and your website content) is visible across social platforms is an essential part of a good SEO strategy. Here's how you can use your social channels to boost your SEO:

- ✓ Link your social accounts to your website. Add widgets or links to your accounts on your home page, contact us page and other relevant areas of your site
- ✓ Grow your followers by posting interesting and engaging content on your social pages, such as images and videos, stories about your team or your customers, or polls, quizzes and questions. Search engines can detect high follower counts and will rank your website accordingly
- ✓ Get your audience liking and sharing! Search engines pay attention to content that engages your audience. Likes, shares, replies and retweets, all count towards your SEO ranking
- ✓ Keep putting content out there! The more you 'feed' your channels new content, the more your ranking opportunities will grow.

YouTube videos

When using YouTube videos there are some important technical things to do which will benefit SEO. Some of the functionalities below might not be available yet in your country but we still want to explain what ideally you need to follow.

1. Use keywords

Incorporate keywords in the description and add them as tags for the video.

- ✓ Titles have a maximum limit of 100 characters. Titles should include one main target keyword and should be representative of what the video is about. Using hashtags in the title to emphasize elements of the video can help users videos also.
- ✓ Please note: YouTube recommends not using too many hashtags. Using more than 15 will mean all hashtags on the video will be ignored.
- ✓ Descriptions have a maximum of 5,000 characters. It is a good idea to use as much of this capacity as possible.
- ✓ When adding tags to your videos, it's important to think of these as keywords and use tags that are relevant to the video and will help it show in search results.

2. Cards

Cards are calls to action, represented by an “i” icon in the top right corner. Clicking on the “i” extends with a thumbnail for a recommended next video.

- ✓ Adding cards is simple: when editing navigation, there is an option called “cards”. From this option, you can “add card”.

3. End screens

- ✓ End screens are clickable thumbnails placed in videos. They can link to another video, the main channel, or give the viewer the ability to subscribe. They are a great way to keep users

engaged. To add an end screen, select “end screen” when editing navigation.

4. Playlists

- ✓ Adding videos to a playlist creates a better user experience, allowing users to easily access videos without having to click around and search for them. To add a video to a playlist, locate the “add to a playlist” option under the “add a message to your video” box on the right-hand side of the main info/setting section of the editor.

5. Closed captions

- ✓ When Google crawls videos, it doesn’t listen to the content. It relies on descriptions and captions. Adding closed captions to videos therefore help to boost both SEO and YouTube rankings.
- ✓ Videos can be transcribed through:

[Rev.com](#)

Google Voice

YouTube itself (note: the automatic captions YouTube provides will need to be edited)

But what exactly is Content value to SEO, and why is it so important that the two work together?

In order for your content to have any SEO value at all, it needs to be beneficial to searchers. How do you make sure it’s beneficial? Google helps us with that answer too. Their recommendation is that, when you begin creating content, make sure it is:

- **Useful and informative:** If you’re launching a site for a restaurant, you can include the location, hours of operation, contact information, menu and a blog to share upcoming events.
- **More valuable and useful than other sites:** If you write about how to train a dog, make sure your article provides more value or a different perspective than the numerous articles on the web on dog training.
- **Credible:** Show your site’s credibility by using original research, citations, links, reviews and testimonials. An author biography or testimonials from real customers can help boost your site’s trustworthiness and reputation.
- **High quality:** Your site’s content should be unique, specific and high quality. It should not be mass-produced or outsourced on a large number of other sites. Keep in mind that your content should be created primarily to give visitors a good user experience, not to rank well in search engines.
- **Engaging:** Bring color and life to your site by adding images of your products, your team, or yourself. Make sure visitors are not distracted by spelling, stylistic, and factual errors. An excessive amount of ads can also be distracting for visitors. Engage visitors by interacting with them through regular updates, comment boxes, or social media widgets.

When these elements are in place, you maximize the potential of the SEO value of your content. Without them, however, your content will have very little value.

For now, we can conclude that the SEO value of content depends on how useful, informative, valuable, credible, and engaging it is.

Link building

Google understands the value of sites by their authority. A link from another high value site is the clearest demonstration of trust.

In the early days of SEO, web ranking was heavily based on keyword usage within the page's content. Without sophisticated search engine algorithms, keyword usage was the easiest way to rank pages. The logic was simple: the more a keyword phrase was used on a webpage, the more likely that was what the page was really about. Unfortunately, SEO practitioners of the time took advantage of this system and used keywords unnaturally by overusing the targeted keyword phrase in order to rank higher.

This method is known nowadays as keyword stuffing.

This causes sites to rank for keyword phrases even when the site doesn't have much to offer on a topic.

A new way to look and evaluate sites on what ranks and what doesn't beyond content alone, was created by Google: **use links between webpages as a ranking factor.**

A link or hyperlink is a clickable object on a webpage that leads from one page to another. Links may visibly appear as text, images, or buttons.

We can classify links based on the destination of the link, whether it leads users to another page on the same site or a different website.

- **Internal links** are links between the pages within your own website.

Search engines determine this by looking at the domain name; if the links on a page link to other pages within the same domain, they are considered internal links.

- **Inbound links** are links that come from other websites or a different domain name.
- **Outbound links** are those links on your website that link out to websites with a different domain name.

Out of the three types of links, **inbound links are the ones with the greatest SEO benefit**, but they are also the hardest to obtain. They are like votes of trust, credibility, and authority that help out in ranking, but it is important that these inbound links are natural links and come from high quality, relevant sites.

In order to have good, natural links, a site **needs quality content** that is trustworthy, credible, and authoritative. This **allows the pages to gain quality, natural links from other websites**, which will help their ranking.

In order to get some inbounds links, there are few things you can consider doing:

- ✓ Guest blogging: This is an excellent way to secure high quality inbound links to your website. Many websites run their own blogs, so partner with likeminded or complementary businesses and get them to write about you and link to your website from their site
- ✓ Popular website, blogs and bloggers: Offer them to provide content to their site, or providing them with a reason to visit your business and experience your services and then write about it.

2. Measure

An important part of building an effective SEO, is analysing, testing and understanding the results. We encourage you to leverage Google Analytics or Adobe Analytics regularly to analyse website performance.

Marketers love to use visitor numbers to measure website performance, and understandably so.

The problem with visitor numbers, however, is that they are just a small part of the overall website picture. And equating visitors numbers with engagement is simply incorrect; the reality is that they don't show anything about behaviour.

To quantify visitor engagement, it is necessary to look beyond visitors. Here are some starting metrics to help gain a better picture of SEO success.

✓ **Bounce rate**

Bounce rate is the percentage of single-page visits. It is closely related to session duration pages per visit.

Bounce rate is useful as a general signal of visitor engagement and the state of content quality and helps to identify when problems exist on a website. High bounce rates are an indication that the visitors are not finding what they are looking for.

Bounce rate has nothing to do with the amount of time spent on page. It simply shows that the user has left from the same page as their initial entry on the site. Someone may spend a few minutes on the landing page and exit to complete a call to action offline. Google Analytics and Adobe Analytics will consider this as a bounce. Thus, it is always advisable that bounce rate is considered along with other metrics (such as time on site or session duration) to assess the success of your page correctly.

A benchmark for Bounce rate is below 70% or ideally below 60%.

✓ **New/return visitors**

The ideal 'new visitor' rate will depend on specific marketing goals.

Returning visitors are a sign that the audience is eager to learn more about your product, make a repeat purchase, or share some content. Experiment with personalized, targeted offers/content to see what brings users back for return visits.

An ideal visitor engagement threshold will correspond with business goals.

You could consider a 30% returning visitor a good rate¹

✓ **Interaction depth**

While first clicks may not reveal much, second and third clicks provide a wealth of information. When users browse multiple pages, it's a sign that they're interested in learning more.

In addition to looking at the depth of pages viewed, pay attention to what types of content being viewed. If you notice someone lingering on case study pages for instance, it may be a sign to share a promotion or personalized call-to-action.

✓ **Time spent on site**

Time spent is one of the most crucial indicators of customer base interest. The more time a user spends looking at a product, the more interested they tend to be in that product, brand or category of product.

Likewise, the more time a visitor spends on blogs or articles, the more likely it is that they are interested in the subjects, keywords, opportunities, services, and products related to that content.

'Time spent' is also a clear and straightforward way to segment a website's most engaged visitors, leads, prospects, and customers.

3. Optimize

As always with digital marketing, optimization is an important factor that will help you improve constantly your campaigns and marketing. This is the same with SEO. Leverage all the free tools available to find new keywords and then create content relevant to those new keywords or remove some keywords and some content.

On top of this optimization process, we would like to provide some best in class practises that can help you as well.

Best Practises

Speed up your website.

- ✓ Your website loading speed is one of the most important rankings factors in Google. No one likes slow websites, and neither does Google. Studies show that a visitor expect a website to load in no more than 2 seconds. If it takes more than 4 seconds, users usually lose patience, and the chances of clicking the back button are increasing with every second of delay.

Check your website speed for free on [Google PageSpeed insights tool](#)

Opportunities

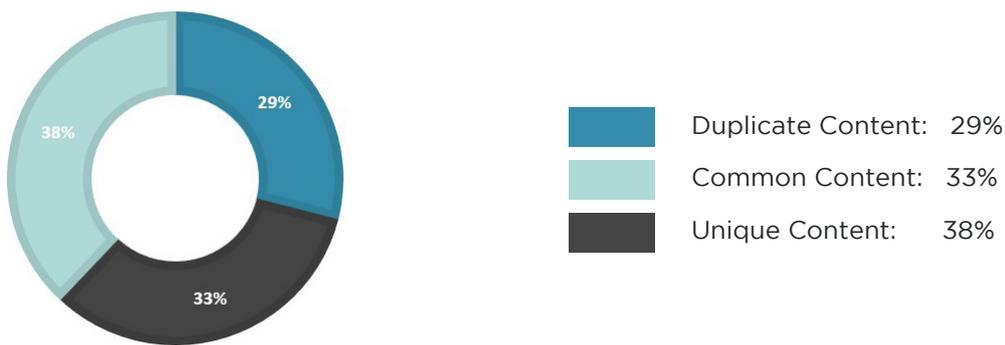
These optimizations can speed up your page load.

| | Opportunity | Estimated Savings |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1 | Serve images in next-gen formats |  0.4 s ▾ |
| 2 | Efficiently encode images |  0.32 s ▾ |
| 3 | Eliminate render-blocking resources |  0.32 s ▾ |
| 4 | Reduce server response times (TTFB) |  0.06 s ▾ |

Remove duplicate content from your website.

- ✓ Duplicate content is your website's worst enemy. Google is very serious about penalizing websites with duplicate content, descriptions or titles. Use tools like Siteliner to detect when duplicate content problems occur on your website.

your Duplicate Content. [Click Here to see your Duplicate Content.](#)



Consistently add fresh content

- ✓ Websites with fresh content added on a regular basis are given more authority, and rank higher in the search results. Fresh content tells Google you are maintaining your website.

Optimize your images

- ✓ All images published on your website should have a relevant name. Use ALT attributes, description and captions for your images.

Don't build Inbound links just to your homepage

- ✓ When building internal links to your website, you have to make everything look as natural as possible. It's normal that a website has most of its links to the homepage. However, if the website has nothing but inbound linking to the main page, it can raise a flag to Google. For this reason, you should also build inbound links to your other pages.

Please get in touch with us for more information on: How to improve natural ranking? How to avoid duplicate content? <https://jolt-digital.com/contact/>

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