The Ultimate Guide To On Page SEO – Advanced

By DoSEOyourself.com

It's simple right? Add your keyword to your Title tag, image alt and H1-H6 headings

Make your keyword density around 2-3% and Bammm!

Your on page SEO is done..

Well this is what a lot of so called gurus will have you believe. The fact of the matter is, there is a lot more too it than that! I totally understand some of the frustrations you encounter, especially when there is so much to think about. But rest assured, I have pact everything you need to know about on page optimisation right here.

There has been a lot written about on page SEO and most of it is exactly the same. This post goes beyond the usual gibberish and **explores EVERY aspect of on page practices in detail.**

This guide is over 5000 words and took me 3 weeks to complete!! Save this page for your future reference and don't forget to share it :-)

What is all of the fuss about?

Without sufficient on page SEO, Google has far less chance of understanding exactly what your site or new page is about. therefore it is absolutely vital that we do everything we can to make it as easy as possible for the Big G to read and fully understand the subject matter that we are trying to rank for.

Google got smarter

Search engines are becoming more sophisticated. Gone are the days where keyword stuffing with a bit of shoddy content were good enough to move your page up the rankings.

Google can understand your content WITHOUT any exact match keywords!!

That's right, Google bots have started to interpret what an image is about without us actually spelling it out to them. Don't believe me! check out this post by Razvan http://cognitiveseo.com/blog/6511/will-google-read-rank-images-near-future/

So I think its about time you took your on page SEO to the next level. First, lets take a look at some important factors that affect rankings

On Page ranking factors according to SearchMetrics:
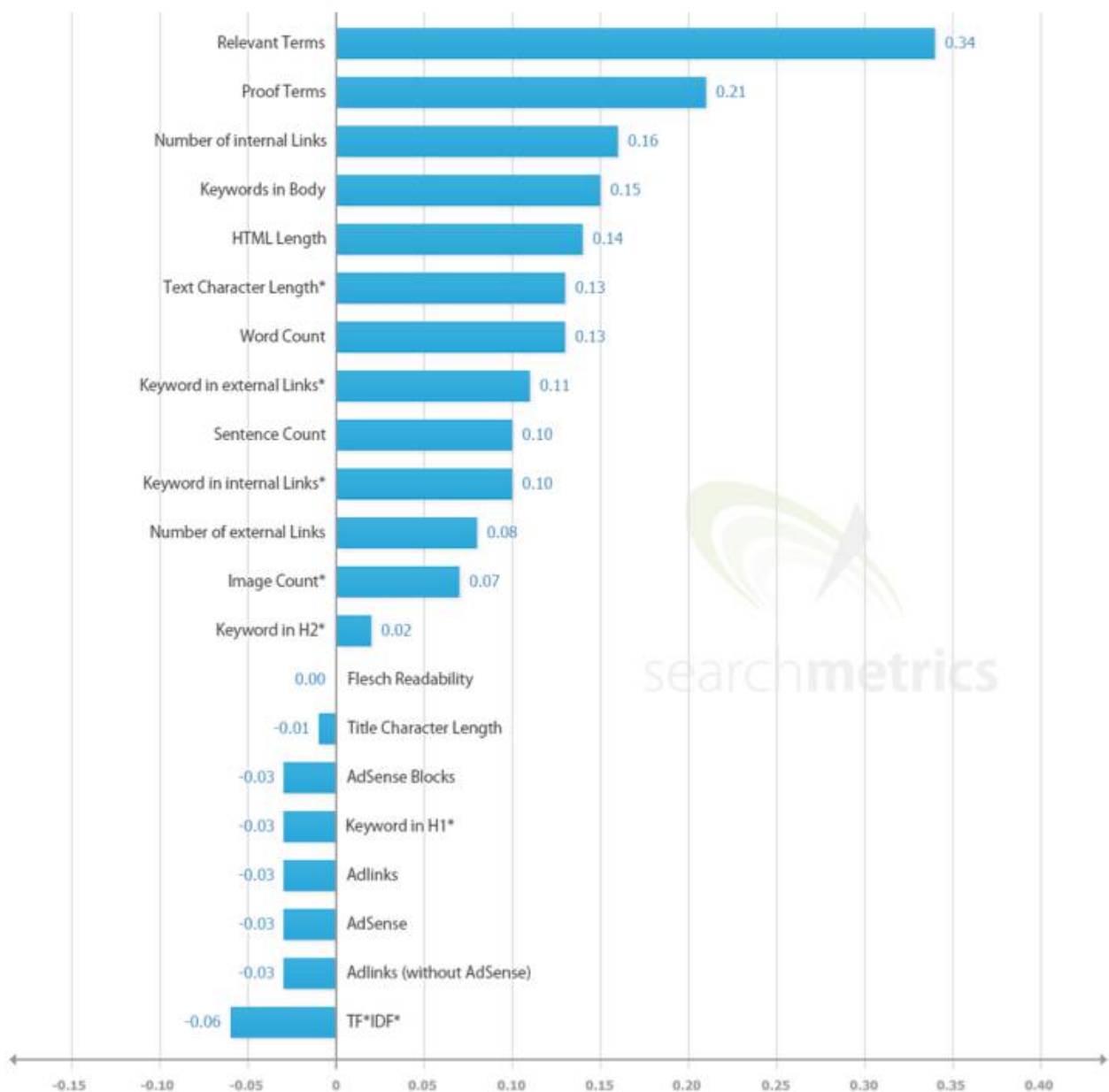
Although keywords remain an important element in terms of usage and placement, It is becoming clear that the overall theme and detail of the on page content is the real factor that determines rankings!

As you can see from the chart - relevant terms and proof terms give the highest relevancy

The quality of your content is key, so I will begin with content because it may not be as clear as you first imagined!!

Content relevancy is key

Keyword placement is no longer substantial enough to improve your rankings. Although Google is much smarter than it once was, the search engines still can't read pages like humans can.

Therefore it has to find other ways to determine what results to display to answer the question or query as best it possibly can.

Ask yourself this....

If you search for the keyword 'Mortgage Calculator'
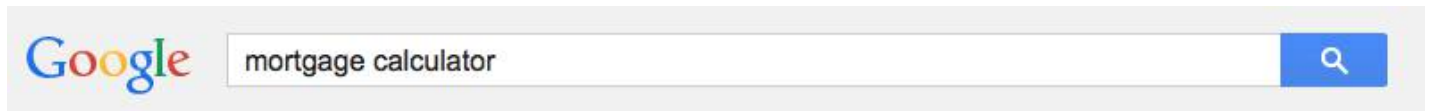
What does Google provide you with?

Yes, a 'mortgage calculator' (Amazing isn't it)

MoneySavingExpert.com

Founder & Editor, Martin Lewis

CUTTING
your cost
FIGHTING
your corne

Cards
Loans

Reclaim
£1,000s

Shopping

Deals
Vouchers

Utilities
Phones

Banking
Saving

Travel
Motoring

MoneySavingExpert.com » Mortgages » Mortgage Calculator

THE ULTIMATE
MORTGAGE CALCULATOR

Rate rises, mortgages, remortgages, overpayments, fixes and more

| Compare fixed-rate mortgages | Ditch your fix? | Repay mortgage with savings? | How much can I borrow? |

| Basic mortgage | Compare two mortgages | Overpayment calculator | Offset mortgage vs savings | Saving for deposit? |

What does this calculator do?

Work out your monthly repayment and the total amount you'll repay, including fees

f Like 798

Mortgage debt   £ 100000

Mortgage term   25 ⬍ years

Annual interest rate 6 % **OR** Monthly payment £

Any fees for taking out mortgage   £ ⬍ 995

Add the fees to mortgage?   Yes ⬍

Mortgage type   🛈 Repayment ⬍

No 2000 word article, No essay about the history of mortgages, No Wikipedia page on how a mortgage calculator works.

You get an actual calculator that will calculate your mortgage!!!

Simple

Now how does Google know that it is providing us with a calculator?

There are very few or no keywords!!

The only place the actual keyword is located is in the Title Tag, which I will come on to soon.

So next time you are [targeting a specific keyword](), think about what it is the user is actually searching for!!

While the exact methodologies of Googles algorithms are not revealed, there has been a lot of research collected over the years to help us better understand exactly what goes on to determine search relevance.

If I search for a question, I expect an answer
If I search for cheap boxing gloves, I expect to see products for sale (Google relates the word 'cheap' to purchasing something)
If I search for for a term that includes the word 'guide' or 'tips', I expect a more detailed answer, the more content the better.
If I search for directions, I expect to see a map
What I am getting at here is that you must put yourself in your users shoes, think what it is they expect.
If your keyword is 'How to fly a plane', you better make sure you have one hell of a detailed post about the mechanics of flying a plane and the logistics of the cockpit, you better have illustrations, images and how to guides!
If your keyword is - 'Blue Leather gloves' you better have a page that sells blue leather gloves, with a clear image, size options, prices, shipping options and a check out.
So before you work through your on-page SEO checklist, first make sure that you are providing the correct type of content to your users.

You can start by checking out your competitors and see how they are presenting their content/products/services etc...

Quick Tips:

- Give your user exactly what they are looking for
- Google can understand the type of content much better
- Make your content as detailed as you can
- Spy on your competition to see how they present their content

Synonyms, LSI and variants

One of the most important factors that you must understand when planning your on-page SEO is the fact that the search engines posses a huge array of synonyms and variants for billions of phrases.

A synonym is a word or phrase that means the same or similar meaning to another word or phrase.

If my search includes the keyword 'New York', Google will understand that 'NYC' also proposes the same meaning.

So when writing your content, keep in mind the main variants and try to include them throughout your article!

Overuse of keyword

New York

New York

New York

New York

Natural Variants

New York

NYC

The Big Apple

New York City

Brooklyn

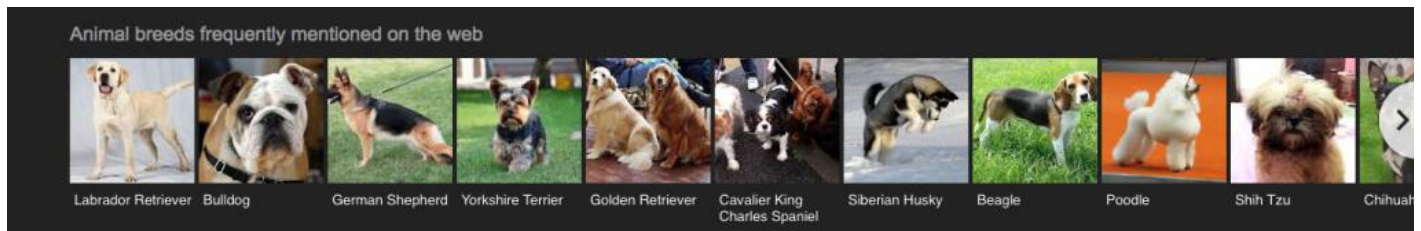## The Use of Synonyms and Variants

'It's important to include a variety of synonyms and variants on your page to give your articles a deeper meaning and relevancy to the reader. Google will give a higher emphasise to content that is enriched with natural text and detail. You only have to look at any Wikipedia page to see that.

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If I search for 'Dog Breeds' then Google will understand that I could also mean, 'Canine breeds' 'puppies' 'pictures of dogs'

In fact, when I typed the search term 'Dog breeds' I was presented with a slide show of images of different dog breeds:

This is what was at the top of my search results:

Animal breeds frequently mentioned on the web

Labrador Retriever Bulldog German Shepherd Yorkshire Terrier Golden Retriever Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Siberian Husky Beagle Poodle Shih Tzu Chihuah

So this shows that Google does actually know what we are looking for and it can use synonyms and variants to accurately provide results.

So what does all this mean for SEO?

In the next section I talk about keyword density and how you should forget your main keyword and write naturally.

What you should be concentrating on is your THEME and TOPIC.

Google knows that a 'Beagle' is a breed of dog

Google knows that the leaning tower of Pisa is in Italy

Google knows 'keyword research' is related to SEO and affiliate marketing.

So when writing your post or article, you need to be as detailed as possible to incorporate all of the LSI and variants to show that your article is in depth and offers the information that the user is searching for.

Example:

What comes to mind when you think of US Presidents?

J F Kennedy

George Washington

White House

Assassination

Dates

Elections
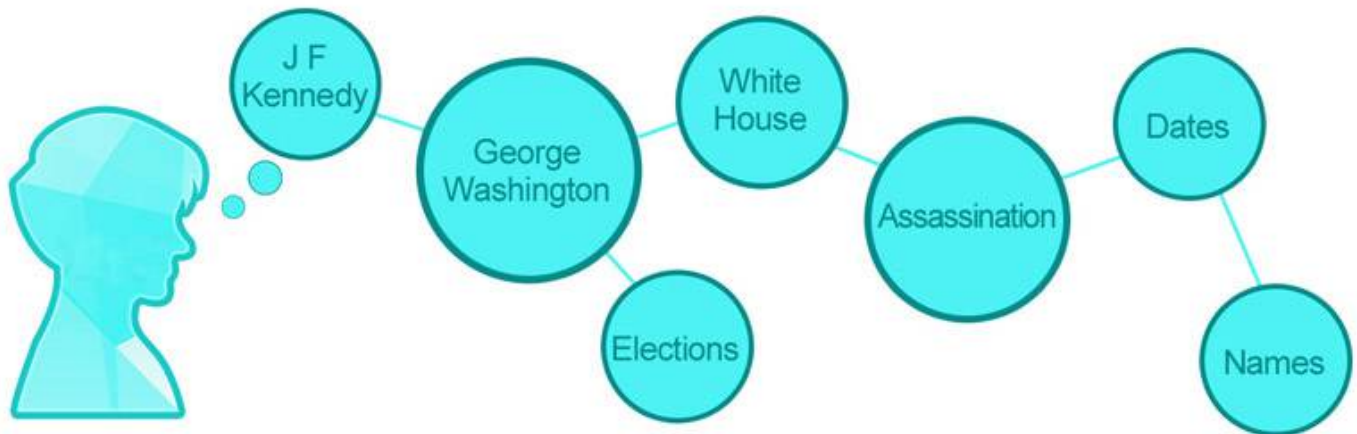
Names

Google will reward content that contains details of related subjects that it understands. An article about US Presidents that does not mention dates and names will not rank highly

Quick Tips:

- Use keyword variants throughout your page
- Use Synonyms instead of repeating your keyword
- Build your content around a theme rather than a single keyword
- Brainstorm associated topics related to your keyword

Keywords and density

Many years ago it was good practice to cram as many keywords into your page as possible.

Then things changed as Google realised that it was possible for people to rank poor quality content on the basis of keyword stuffing.

Google cut down on this and and updated their algorithm to spot instances of keyword stuffing. A lot of SEO's suggested a keyword density below 4% was good, some argued it was lower.
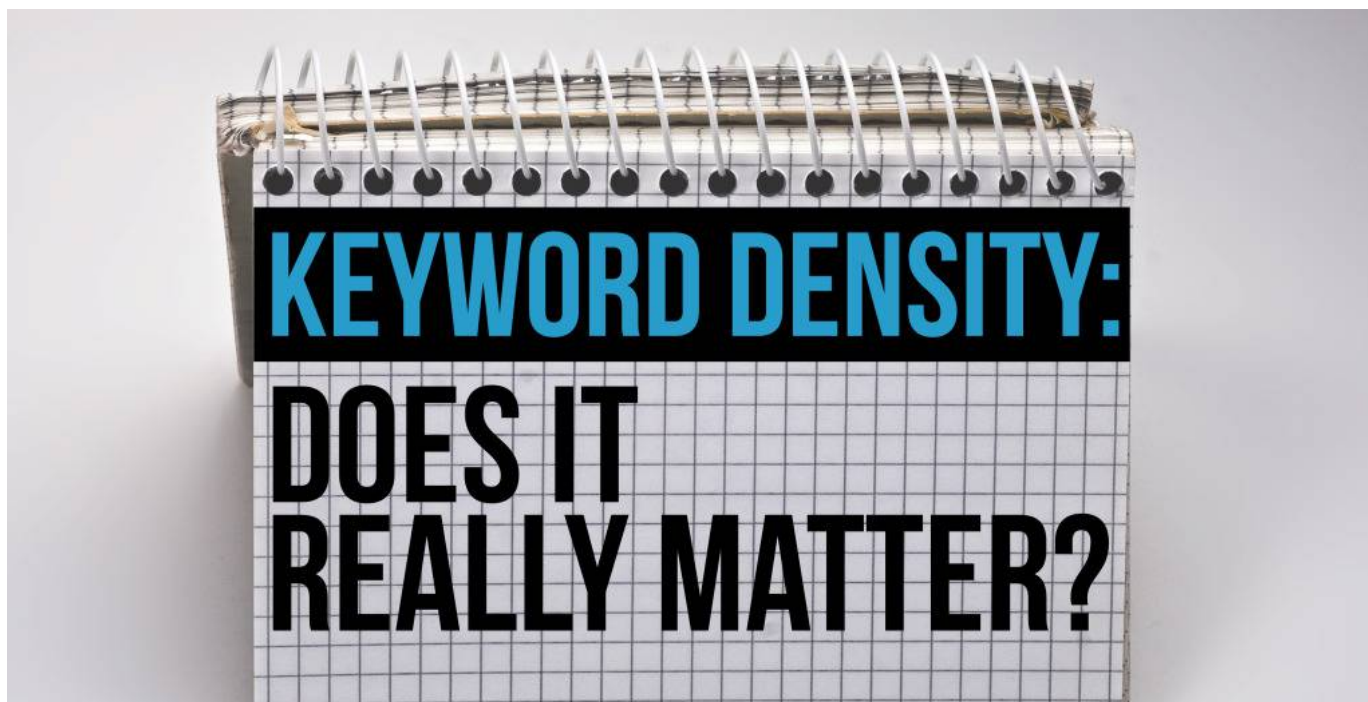
So what is the perfect keyword density today?

My answer would be to FORGET your keyword!!

Don't attempt to consciously include it your article. Google is now smart enough to understand what you are talking about without you having blatantly tell them!

So what should I do?

Before I continue let me get this straight. Keyword research is still absolutely vital and should NOT be overlooked. Doing keyword research provides the basis of your whole post, page, article, blog!!

Here is a great guide that explains everything you need to know about keyword research:

http://backlinko.com/keyword-research

I have also done a tutorial on how to find awesome keywords using Long Tail Pro - See Here

Ok, so once you have your keywords in mind, you want to structure your article around the 'topic' of your keywords.

Remember this.... **Relevancy over Density**

If your keyword consists of 2 words (for example: 'Underwater camera') then it is more natural for that keyword to appear more times throughout a page than if your keyword was longer (example: 'what is the best underwater camera')

The best tip I can give is to write your article naturally, then go back and check your keywords after and adjust accordingly.

Remember, there is NO magic number when it comes to keyword density - Just keep it low and keep it natural

Here is a video of Matt Cutts actually talking some sense for once!!

Here are some free tools to check your keyword density:

http://tools.seobook.com/general/keyword-density/

http://www.seocentro.com/tools/seo/keyword-density.html

http://www.keyworddensity.com

My personal recommendation would be to check your keyword density, it is is higher than 2% then you should lower it by replacing some of the keywords with synonyms and variants.

Quick Tips:
- Forget about your keyword
- Keep density to a minimum
- Short keywords will naturally have a higher density
- Longtail keywords should have a lower density
- Write your article naturally, check keywords after

Title Tags - Use them wisely

The fundamentals of on page SEO, and considered the most important factor to get right.

This is where everybody inserts their main keywords

But is it the correct thing to do?

According to MOZ, (http://moz.com/learn/seo/title-tag) The Title tag is the most important on page element (apart from the actual content)

The Title tag, also know as a Title element; represents a concise description of your content and is the easiest way for Google and your visitors to get a quick indication of what your content is about.

It appears not only at the top of your post, but also in the browser and SERP results. Google also highlights the keywords when displaying results in their search engine:
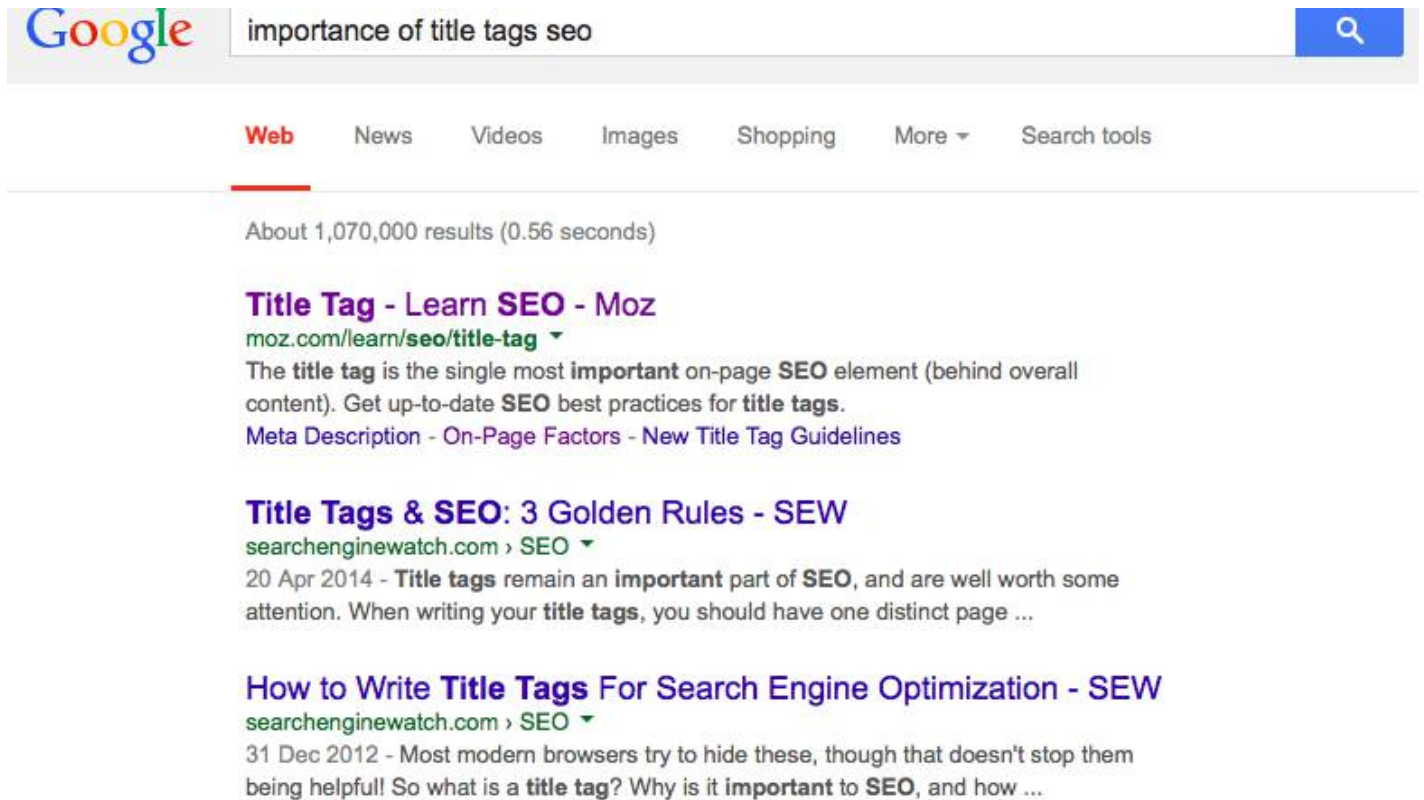
This gives your listing extra visibility and if google are highlighting keywords, it's a sure fire indication that including your main keywords in your title tag is an absolute must!!

Lets put it to the test

Search Google for any keyword and 99% of the time you will see that the top ranking pages all include the word in the title tag.

As a quick test, I am going to type the keyword '*content marketing tips'* in to Google

By the way, this is a great post on content marketing techniques by Robbie Richards: http://www.robbierichards.com/seo/16-explosive-content-promotion-strategies/

Here are the results:

9 Best Social Media and **Content Marketing Tips** From Buffe…
www.convinceandconvert.com/**content-marketing**/9-best-from-buffer/ ▾
badge guest post FLATTER 9 Best Social Media and **Content Marketing Tips** From Buffer We've experimented with lots of different content marketing methods at …

7 Outstanding **Content Marketing Tips** for Small Businesses …
searchenginewatch.com › Content ▾
23 Jun 2014 - Small businesses have historically been slow to adopt the **content marketing** strategies that corporate marketers use. But as SEO has evolved …

10 Awesome **Content Marketing Tips** For Small Business
www.business2community.com/**content-marketing**/10-awesome-**content**-… ▾
9 Sep 2014 - The first four tips for content marketing happen before you actually publish. … These are just a few **content marketing tips** you can start using …

As you can see, the top 3 results all contain the exact keyword!

So what are the best practices for Tile Tags?

Add creative words around your main keywords

There is a little more too it than placing your keyword in your title. If you notice from the example above, there are also other words contained in the title.

Search results are becoming more sophisticated and are generated more to user experience

It's important to include other words to create emotion and and click ability, Google wants

to show interesting results.

Looking at the example again above, notice how they all spark interest and curiosity!! the words they use include, 'awesome' 'bets' outstanding'

They are giving the reader a reason to click!!

Length between 50-60 characters
Google usually shows only the first 50-60 characters, anything after this will be cut off, so take this into consideration when writing your title tags. Try to get your point across within the limitations.

Main keywords should be close to the beginning.
According to a test carried out by Moz http://moz.com/search-ranking-factors placing your keyword near the start of your Title tag has greater ranking implications!

Although probably only minimal, it is worth following this practice

Uniqueness, keep it real
Google likes unique content, dames goes for title tags. Don't copy somebody elses title word for word. If you do you are far less likely to outrank the site you have copied.

Be creative and use unique title that explains exactly what your page is about

Don't keyword stuff
Only use your keywords once in the title, over using your keyword can result in an over optimisation penalty

Look at the Title of this page, this is a good example of what you should be aiming at!!

Headings <h1-h6> - Avoid over optimisation

Many will have you believe that you should also be including your main keywords in some of your headings

I disagree

In fact, I try to avoid it if possible, unless I really have too!

DO NOT use your main keywords in your headings if possible

Over optimisation is something that you should be aware of at all times, stuffing keywords into your headings as well as your title is an obvious indication of manipulation.

Going back to the Google results

The site ranked number 1 for 'content marketing tips'
is http://www.convinceandconvert.com/content-marketing/9-best-from-buffer/

The Title contains the words 'Content marketing tips'

However, NONE of the headings throughout the article contain the keywords.

Take a look at a few of them:

social media.

1. Share Images on Twitter: Increase Retweets by 150%

Since Twitter announced inline images, we've been experimenting with this change h

2. Share Content More Than Once

3. A/B Test on Social Networks

Site 2: http://searchenginewatch.com/article/2351403/7-Outstanding-Content-Marketing-Tips-for-Small-Businesses
Again, the title contains the main keywords, but when it comes to the headings, the keywords are not used at all

Site 3: http://www.business2community.com/content-marketing/10-awesome-content-marketing-tips-small-business-01002755

Again, the headings do not contain the keywords 'content marketing tips'.

Having researched a number of sites I have found a lot of evidence of this.

If you think about it, **it makes sense**

If you had the keyword 'Content marketing tips' in your Title, why would you also use it in your headings??

This is one of the main reasons webmasters suffer over optimisation penalties.
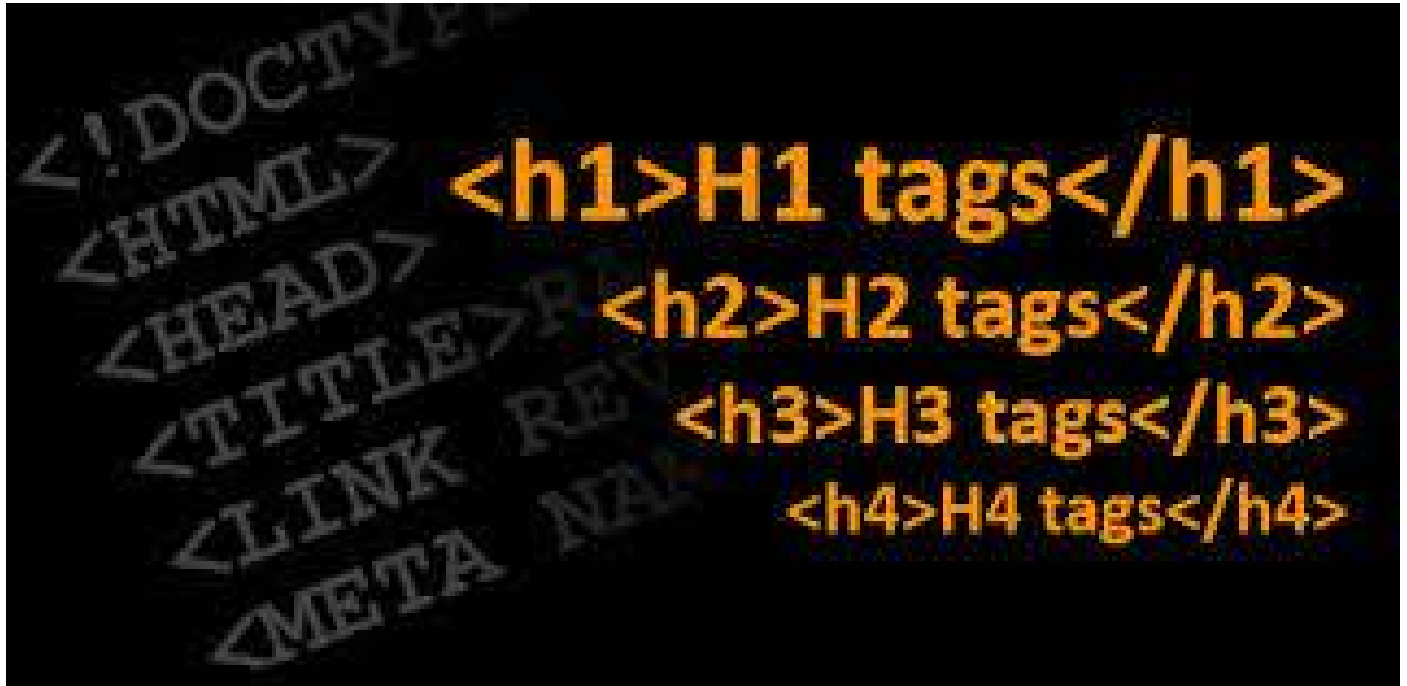
So how should I optimise my H1-6 Headings?

Your article should be structured into relevant sections.

Your title describes the overall picture, for example, this post is about 'on page SEO'

The headings are a more detailed breakdown of the different aspects of on page SEO

Example, my sub headings are about:

Title tags
Headings
Content
Image alt text
Meta tags
Site speed
etc.....
Google is clever enough to understand that my subheadings are related to my primary subject.

There is no need to start including my main keyword in my headings, its not natural.

But...

If it happens to fall naturally into one of your headings without consciously inserting it then thats ok.

Just don't overdo it.

Which Heading tags should you use?

<h1>H1 Tags </h1> **Your Title or main heading**

<h2> H2 Tags </h2> **Your main sub headings**

<h3> H3 Tags </h3> **If your subheadings need to be broken down into further headings**

For example. The <h2> Tag in this section is (Headings <h1-h6> - Avoid over optimisation*)*

The <h3> Tags are (So how should I optimise my H1-6 Headings?)   (which heading tags should you use)

The correct use of H1-H6 tags are a good way to give your post structure, and it allowed Google to understand what your page is about!!

Quick Tips:

- Avoid using your keyword in your headings
- Headings describe different areas of your topic
- It is not natural to include your keyword a number of times in different headings

URL Structure

Using the correct URL structure plays an important role when it comes to on-page SEO.

Google will pay more emphasis on a page that contains relevant keywords in the URL structure over a page that does not.

Your URL describes your site and page, it should be descriptive without being lengthy.

You should be able to understand what the page is about just by looking at the URL. Not only is this helpful to search engines, it is also helpful to humans.

To ensure that your URL extension, you must make sure that you set your Permalinks to 'post-name' if using wordpress.

For a complete guide to setting up WordPress for SEO click here.

Here is a useful info graphic that explains the correct anatomy of a well crafted URL

http://moz.com/blog/seo-cheat-sheet-anatomy-of-a-url

SEO-FRIENDLY URL

http://store.example.com/topics/subtopic/descriptive-product-name#top

1. Protocol
2. Subdomain
3. Domain
4. Top-Level Domain
5. Folders / Paths
6. Page
7. Named Anchor

Keyword Priority[1]
Observed Google priority of keyword placement:

(1) Domain
(2) Subdomain
(3) Folder
(4) Path/Page

SEO Tips for URLs
- Use subdomains carefully. They may be treated as separate entities, splitting domain authority.
- Separate path & page keywords with hyphens ("-").
- Anchors may help engines understand page structure.
- Keyword effectiveness in URLs decreases as URL length and keyword position increases.[1]

[1] SEOmoz correlational data (2009)

Examples Of correct URL structure

The URL structure should be as descriptive and relevant as possible.

Usually your domain name will be your brand or business, followed by a category and then followed by your page description:

Example:

Silver Cross - Babies R Us - Britain's greatest toy store
www.toysrus.co.uk/browse/babies/product/**silver-cross**/ ▼
Established in 1877, **Silver Cross** has been helping parents give their children the best start in life for more than a ... **Silver Cross** Linear Freeway **Pushchair**.

In this next example the brand is actually the keyword that I searched for.

Here I have searched for '*Tomme Tippy Bottles*'

As you can see, 'TommeTippy' is used in the Domain, therefore no need to use it again in the extension:

Quick Tips:

- Use your keyword once in your URL
- Describe your page in a few words
- Try to keep your extension below 5 words

Image Alt Text Optimisation

A picture tells a thousand words!!

Shame Google can't quite see it like that!!

Due to the fact that google can not fully read or understand an image, we have the opportunity to enter a short description to allow the bots to better understand what our image is about.

Alt text (or Image Alt Attribute) also provides a better user experience for people who can not see or can not see images in their browser.

It is also a great way to gain more traffic from image searches in Google.

Does Alt text have an impact on SEO?

The main question here is; Will adding my keywords to my image alt text boost my rankings?

There has been sufficient studies into the impact of alt tags on SEO. It is believed that search engines do not take into account the alt attribute when determine rankings.

However other studies have shown that the correct placement of keywords can have a

positive affect!

Here is an interesting study that proved that keywords in alt text actually helped rankings.

You can read the report here: http://blog.silktide.com/2012/04/does-image-alt-text-get-used-in-googles-rankings/

The conclusion of the report:

So back to my original question, does the wording we put in an image Alt text get used Google's rankings, yes, yes it does. But it shouldn't, so don't go keyword stuffing!

Best practices for Alt Text

When it comes to writing your alt tags I see it as similar to writing your URL extension. Keep it short, keep it relevant and keep descriptive.

Think of it from a users point of view. If you were to describe an image that the user could not see, how would you describe in just a few words!

Here are some things you should keep in mind:

The following formats are acceptable, GIF, JPEG, BMP, PNG, SVG and WebP.
Change the file name to something descriptive rather than the default name, such as IMG2899289.jpg.
Although all sizes are usually acceptable you should take into consideration the file size to help your site load faster, There are some cool online resizing tools that will reduce the file sizes, smash.it being one I use.

Another useful plugin is: '[SEO friendly images](#)' This cool plugin optimises all of your images with proper ALT and title attributes

I will be covering more on site speed later.

Your image alt attribute must contain 10 words or less to describe the image. Here is an example:

```
<img src="smiley.gif" alt="Yellow Smiley face">
```

If using WordPress you can simply click on an image to edit and then enter your Alt-text as required:

Avoid stuffing keywords into your alt attribute, only include your main keyword if it actually describes the image.
Multiple images:

If you have more than 1 image within the same category, such as watches or trainers. You should add a unique description and not repeat the same alt attribute on multiple images

Test your Alt Tags with this free tool - http://www.feedthebot.com/tools/alt/

Keyword placement in first paragraph

It is often said that you must place you main keyword within the first paragraph or first 100 words!

But is this statement entirely true?

Theoretically, the first paragraph of a page is the most important area after the main Title. Google advises that your most important information should be placed in these areas.

It makes sense to include your keyword or at least the general topic of your article in these areas:

We have already covered keyword density and we understand that Google no longer requires the multiple use of a keyword to understand what the page is about.

Matt Cutts has already stated that once they see your keyword, they do not require it again and again

It can actually harm your rankings by keyword stuffing.

Be smart!!

Include your main keyword or part of it in your title - because we already know this holds a strong relevance

Use you first paragraph to best describe what your page has to offer.

If your keyword is "How Too....."

Then try to provide a short descriptive answer to that question in your opening paragraph, rather than trying to include that keyword again!

If it happens that your keyword fits in naturally then I would suggest only using it once!

Take this for example, this is how you should go about your opening paragraph:

I have entered the query "Importance of keywords for SEO" into Google:
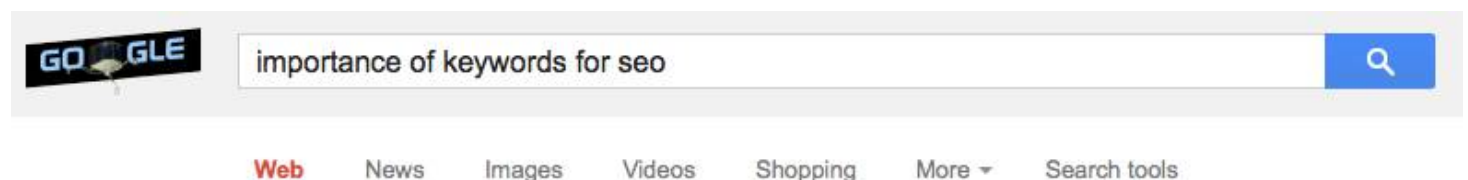
Google came back with theses results:

Site ranked No:1

The page that is ranked number 1 has this as it's opening paragraph:

> Keywords are the most important SEO element for every search engine, they are what search strings are matched against. Choosing the right keywords to optimize for is thus the first and most crucial step to a successful SEO campaign. If you fail on this very first step, the road ahead is very bumpy and most likely you will only waste your time and money. There are many ways to determine which keywords to optimize for and usually the final list of them is made after a careful analysis of what the online population is searching for, which keywords have your competitors chosen and above all - which are the keywords that you feel describe your site best.

Straight to the point, question answered + more details on keywords!!

The exact keyword was NOT used, however a variant of the main keyword is used

Site ranked no:2

Also ranking with the use of Variants and Synoyms which we have discussed the importance of already!

Is keyword research still important after Hummingbird?

8 COMMENTS   KEYWORDS   WORDTRACKER TOOLS   SEO

Mal Darwen discusses the importance of keyword research after Google's Hummingbird update

Old school SEO was pretty straightforward. Choose some keywords (maybe even just dream them up), chuck them in your title tags and meta keyword tags (remember them?), repeat them over your content, hammer in some easy-to-acquire links, and watch your page start to climb the search rankings.

HMM...
I NEED SOME CROCHET
HAT PATTERNS!

FREE CROCHET HAT PATTERNS
SEARCH

G

giada_ghw
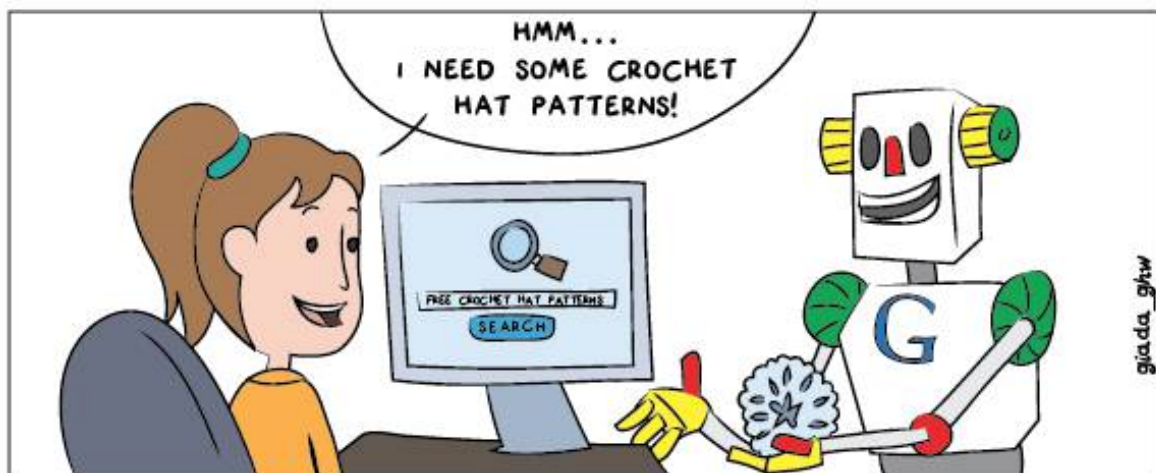
Site ranked No: 3

Again, this site starts with a good descriptive first paragraph with variants of the keyword:

Now I bet my bottom dollar that neither of these sites were consciously attempting to rank for the keyword "Importance of keywords for SEO"

It is probably not the best example that I could have chosen, but it shows Google is getting good at providing quality content and that the importance of exact keyword placement is diminishing.

The example I gave was using a LongTail keyword

If your keyword only contains 2 words for example, then the chances are that you are going have to include it more often because there are less variants!

When I changed my search to just 'Keyword reasearch'
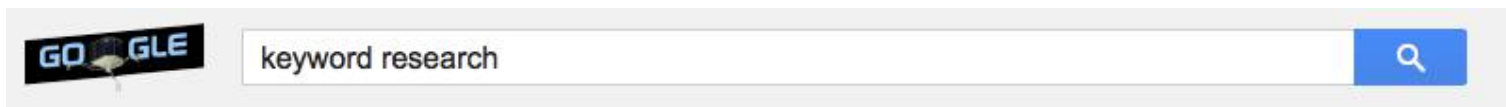
One of the top results was this:

http://backlinko.com/keyword-research (It's a fantastic guide by the way)

Here the target keyword IS placed once in the first paragraph as well as in the Title. This is to be expected with it only consisting of 2 words.

So what can we conclude from this evidence?

Don't worry to much about your keyword placement. Make sure your main content areas provide the reader with the most important information.

I would strongly recommend using synonyms and variants where possible and if your target keyword fits in naturally, then by all means insert it.

But only do it once!!!

Quick Tips:

- Keyword in first paragraph is not necessary, Use keyword variants
- Try to answer the readers query within the first paragraph
- Provide your most important info in the first paragraph
- Only include keyword if it fits in naturally

Page Speed

Back in 2010, Matt Cutts revealed that Google would be using 'page load speed' as a ranking factor in it's algorithm

Did you know that for every second delay there is around a 7% decrease in sales and an 11% loss in page views!!

- 47% of people expect a web page to load in two seconds or less.

- 40% will abandon a web page if it takes more than three seconds to load.

- 52% of online shoppers say quick page loads are important for their loyalty to a site.
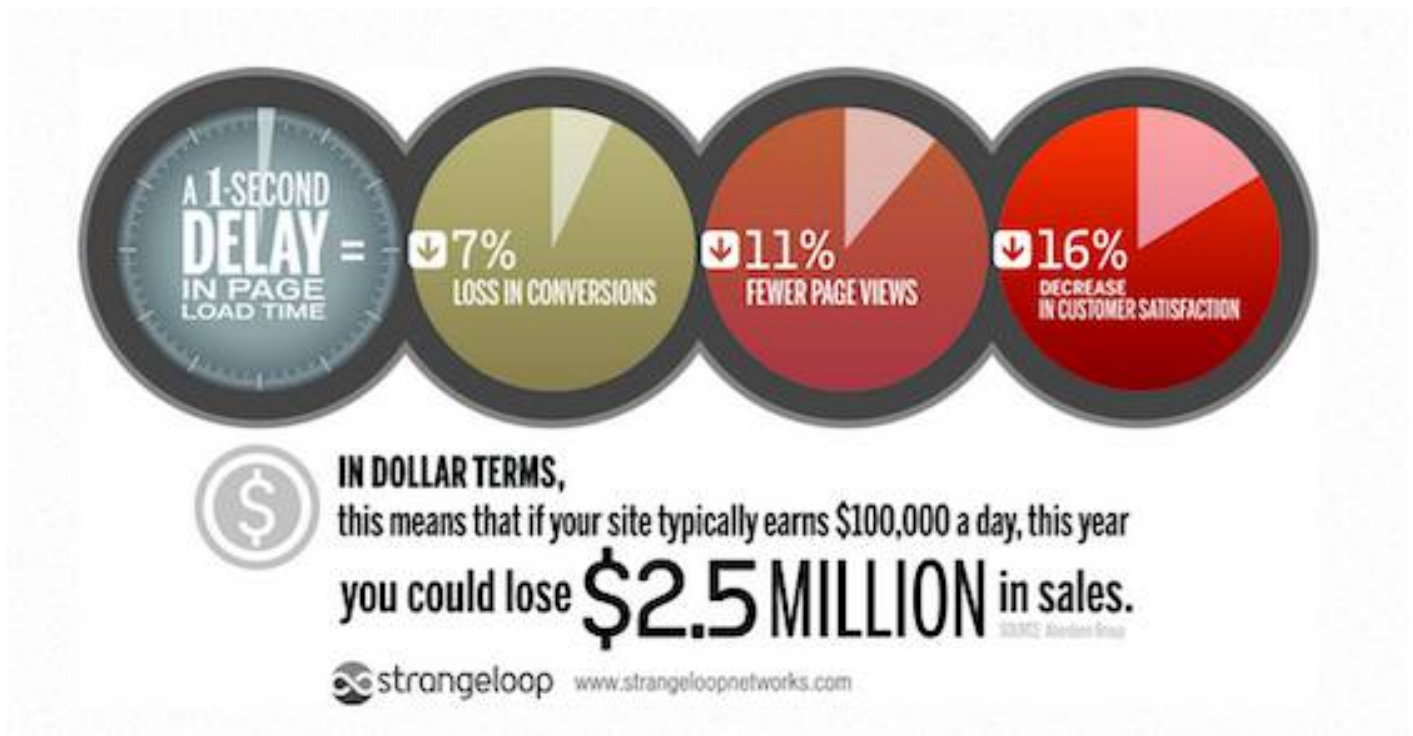
In the grand scheme of things, that is billions of dollars lost every year due to slow loading pages!

Recent studies have concluded that Google doesn't just test your pages speed, they actually monitor your load speed from different countries, devices and networks.

Your page may load fast in the US on a mobile device, but maybe slower in the UK on a standard browser!!

I highly recommend that you do everything you can to increase the speed of all of your pages.

Here is a great tool that I use to test my sites:

http://tools.pingdom.com/fpt/

Pingdom Website Speed Test

Enter a URL to test the load time of that page, analyze it and find bottlenecks

www.example.com **Test Now**
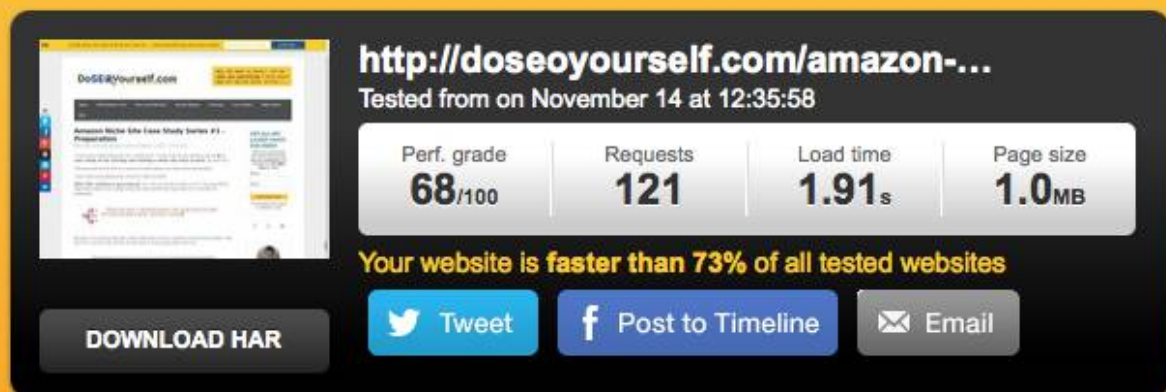
☑ Save test and make it public

Test from:

○ Amsterdam, Netherlands ○ New York City, New York, USA
○ Dallas, Texas, USA

Settings ▼

Just enter your URL and hit the 'Test Now' button

Here is an example using one of my pages:

http://doseoyourself.com/amazon-...
Tested from on November 14 at 12:35:58

Perf. grade	Requests	Load time	Page size
68/100	**121**	**1.91**s	**1.0**MB

Your website is **faster than 73%** of all tested websites

🐦 Tweet   f Post to Timeline   ✉ Email

DOWNLOAD HAR

My load time is 1.91s which is not bad. As you can see, it's faster than 73% of all tested websites!!

There are things I can do to make this page even faster, and Pindom gives us recommendations on the different areas that can be improved!

Page Speed Performance	
Recommendation	**Grade**
Parallelize downloads across hostnames	0
Combine external JavaScript	27
Combine external CSS	44
Remove query strings from static resources	59
Serve static content from a cookieless domain	71
Minimize DNS lookups	73
Leverage browser caching	77
Minimize redirects	78
Specify a cache validator	92
Specify a Vary: Accept-Encoding header	94
Minimize request size	99
Avoid bad requests	100
Performance grade:	68/100

Upgrade your host

The main reason why my site loads fast is because I use WPEngine as my host! Had no problems with them so far.

If you want a cheaper option then I can also recommend Traffic Planet Hosting as I also use them on some of my other sites, and they are just as fast and reliable!

The reason I chose [WP Engine](#) for this blog was not only for the speed, but they also:

Conduct automatic daily back ups
Run their own custom based caching software, so you don't need to download cache plugins
Offer a separate staging area so you can work on your site whilst keeping it live
Servers run on Nginx which are much faster than Apache
Offer a CDN to make your load time even faster!!

Optimise your images

One factor than can cause a delay in load time is your images. Luckily there are some really easy to use tools available to compress your images.

Firstly you can run your site through JPegReducer

You can also use Smush.it to compress your images. Here are a few recommended tools:

Smus.it allowed you to compress images in bulk or individually through your WordPress panel.

CW Image Optimizer reduces your images as you upload them to your site. You also have the option of reducing older images too

Hammy is a tool that will generate a number of re-sized images and present your user with the lowest possible size that is appropriate. This helps with load time and user experience.

Use a CDN

A CDN, also know as a Content Delivery Network is a method of caching your date and files and saving them at different locations around the world.

When somebody loads your page they are routed through the closest data centre, resulting in a faster load speed.

Here is a more detailed explanation from Wikipedia:

A **content delivery network** or **content distribution network (CDN)** is a large distributed Internet. The goal of a CDN is to serve content to end-users with high availability and high p today, including web objects (text, graphics and scripts), downloadable objects (media files, streaming media, on-demand streaming media, and social networks.

A popular CDN provider is CloufFlare. They have over 28 data centres across the globe

Optimise your database

The database is the heart of your site and it's where everything is stored. If not optimised properly it can have a significant affect on your sites speed.

Everytime a page is loaded, it reads your database. If your database is full of crap and disorganised it will take longer for the page to find exactly what it is looking for.

If you are using Wordpress then here is a handy plugin to help clean up your database.

https://wordpress.org/plugins/wp-optimize/

Did you know that every time you save or update a post, WordPress will save a revision of that post in your database.

Now image if your post is long and contains a lot of images (a bit like this post)

That's a lot of bytes that are on your MySQL overhead!!

So make sure you clean up your database to improved your load speed

Caching

One of the best things you can do to improve your load speed right now is to use 'caching'.

Basically this stores a websites elements on your hard drive, so the next time you visit the website, it doesn't have to send another HTTP request to the server, greatly decreasing the time it takes the page to load.

Although there are a number of caching options and plugins available for free, I have never really had any good experiences with them, which is another reason why I chose WPEngine hosting.

The 2 most popular plugins for caching your site are:

[W3 Total Cache](#)
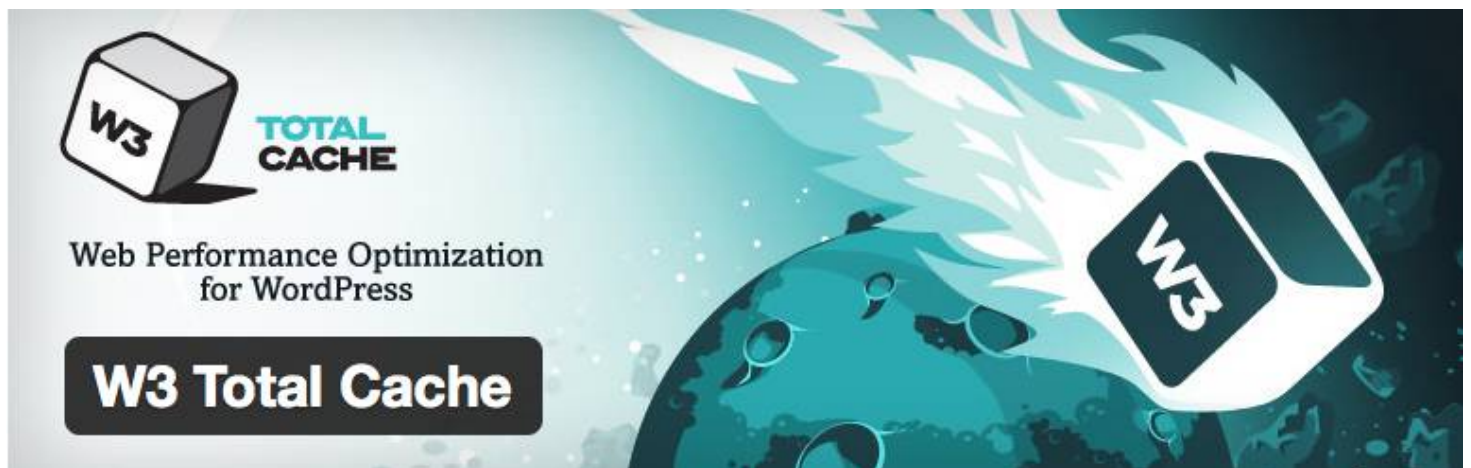
And [WP Super cache](#)

If your host does not provide automatic caching then these are good options for you to use.

Other options

Although I have covered the most important factors above, there are a few more things

that you can do to help reduce load time:

Choose a professional theme that is well coded
Optimise your CSS and Javascript
Keep your WP plugins updated
Delete all spam comments

Quick Tips:

- Your page needs to be as fast as possible
- Test your speed using tools.pingdom.com
- Upgrade hosting, compress files, optimise database
- Using caching and a CDN

Meta Tags and Descriptions

In 2009 Google announced that Meta Tags and Descriptions would NOT count as a ranking factor.

These days I do not bother with Meta Tags at all, however I still find it necessary to write good Meta descriptions because although Google say that it doesn't affect rankings, it can certainly help you to pick up extra traffic by carefully placing certain keywords within your description.

When writing your Meta description you want to include your keywords whilst capturing the users attention.

It's almost like its your chance to sell yourself amongst the other 9 results on the page.

Writing a compelling description that attracts more click throughs not only results in more visitors to your site, but it may also help to boost your rankings if Google see that more people are clicking on your site as opposed to the other search results.
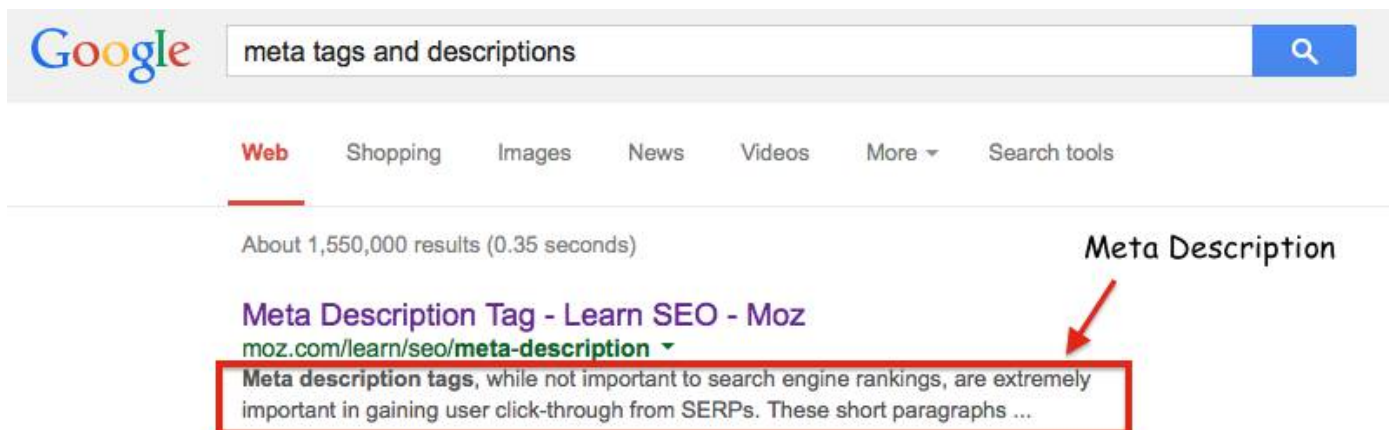
Meta description best practices

Try to keep it under 160 characters, as anything after this will be cut off

Try to incorporate 'curiosity' into your Description to improve click throughs

Avoid duplicate descriptions, i.e. Don't copy off other sites

Include your Keyword within the description

How to increase traffic with careful 'word' placement

Although Google claims that Meta descriptions do not affect rankings, I do believe that they help to increase rankings for long tail keyword variations.

For example:

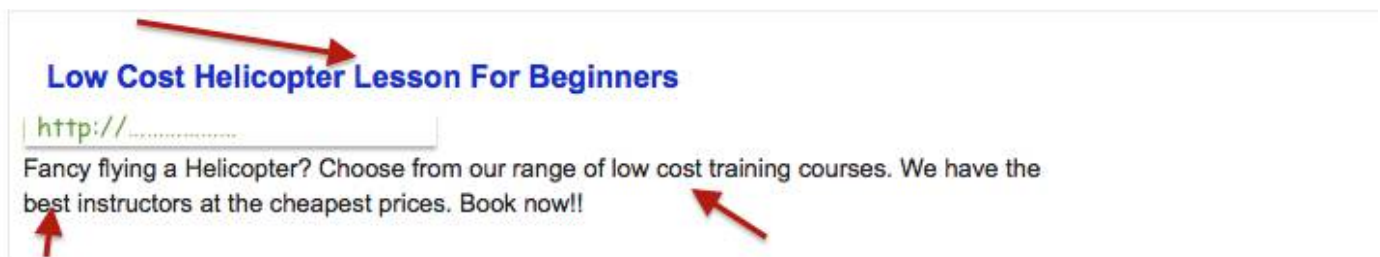Lets say you are targeting the keyword: 'helicopter lessons'

The person searching for this could type in many variants such as.

When writing your Meta description, try to incorporate some of these words. For example

When you search a query, Google will highlight all of the words within your query.

So lets say we typed in '*The best helicopter lesson*'

We have ALL 4 words placed somewhere in our title and description. Although it does not state the keyword exactly, it does provide all of the words and it will give your listing more preference.

See how I cleverly placed the word '*Best*' into the description by saying, 'we have the best instructors'

I have also included the words 'training courses' to.

So even if somebody searched for '*the best helicopter training courses*', we would have a very good chance of appearing towards the top of the search results!!

Next time you write a meta description, try to cover as many angles as possible to pick up extra rankings and more traffic.

Quick Tips:

- Meta tags are no longer relevant
- Use your Description to include keywords and variants
- Keep description under 160 characters
- Increase traffic with careful word placement

Linking out to authority Sites

It's said that linking out to other sites in your niche has a positive impact on SEO, and to be honest I have to agree.

It makes sense that if you link out to relevant sites that will provide your readers with added value, it will improve your user experience, thus give your site more credibility in the eyes of the search engines.

If you link out to authority sites in your niche, Google gets a better understanding of what your own site is actually about

And it can categorise your site along side 'already established' sites within your niche!

Look through this post and you will see a number of instances where I have linked out to other websites.

The reason I have done this is to provide you with:

Further reading on the subject
A more detailed analysis of what I have already touched
Evidence
Useful tools and plugins
References
Providing links like this gives your content more depth and credibility.

There are a few things you should consider before linking out:

Make sure it is natural - Only link out if it is necessary and relevant

Link to sites that are related to your niche, it doesn't have to be directly associated with your niche

Link to other pages of your own site - It's important to interlink within your site when viable.

Look at any WikiPedia page

When you come across a page on Wikipedia, notice how many inbound links there are....

Yes, tons of them!!

Here is a quick example, this is just the first section of the article on Wikipedia. 14 links pointing at other pages of there site.

Precipitation

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

For other uses, see Precipitation (disambiguation).

In meteorology, **precipitation** is any product of the condensation of atmospheric water vapour that falls under gravity.[1] The main forms of precipitation include drizzle, rain, sleet, snow, graupel and hail. Precipitation occurs when a portion of the atmosphere becomes saturated with water vapour, so that the water condenses and "precipitates". Thus, fog and mist are not precipitation but suspensions because the water vapour does not condense sufficiently to precipitate. Two processes, possibly acting together, can lead to air becoming saturated: cooling the air or adding water vapour to the air. Generally, precipitation will fall to the surface; an exception is virga which evaporates before reaching the surface. Precipitation forms as smaller droplets coalesce via collision with other rain drops or ice crystals within a cloud. Rain drops range in size from oblate, pancake-like shapes for larger drops, to small spheres for smaller drops. Unlike raindrops, snowflakes grow in a variety of different shapes and patterns, determined by the temperature and humidity characteristics of the air the snowflake moves through on its way to the ground. While snow and ice pellets require temperatures close to the ground to be near or below freezing, hail can occur during much warmer temperature regimes due to the process of its formation.

Its safe to say that Wikipedia ranks for almost everything!!

Quick Tips:

- Link out to authority sites where relevant
- Link to pages that will benefit your reader
- Use Inbound links where possible

Summary

There is a lot to think about when it comes to on page optimisation. I hope you have taken something from this post and I hope it will help to improve your rankings.

The most important aspects are content and relevancy. We have also concluded that it is vital that you place your target keyword in your Title.

Our evidence also showed that adding keywords into your H1-H6 headings is not necessary and can cause over optimisation issues.

The use of synonyms and LSI words are becoming ever more apparent and for this reason you should add as much detail as possible to your content.

But.... We know that is not always necessary. Maybe your visitors are not expecting a massive article, like in our example about the 'mortgage calculator'.

Be specific and be realistic!!

Here is a cool info-graphic from Rand Fishkin at Moz:

The "Perfectly Optimized" Page

Title & Meta Elements

Title: Chocolate Donuts from Mary's Bakery

Meta Description: Learn the 3 secrets to Mary's award-winning chocolate donuts, get times & locations for availability, and learn how to make your own donuts at home.

URL: http://marysbakery.com/chocolate-donuts

LOGO | Navigation Menu

Chocolate Donuts from Mary's Bakery

There's 3 secrets that explain why our **chocolate donuts** have won awards, generated hour-long lines, & even inspired hip-hop tracks. They are:

#1: Our Ingredients
XYZ

#2: The Baking Process
ABC

#3: Timing
DEF

115   477   115
Like   Tweet   +1

How to Get Hold of Mary's Chocolate Donuts
(aka locations, pricing & availability)

How to Make Chocolate Donuts at Home
(aka our recipe for the **perfect donut**)

Endorsements (including one from Homer!)

NOTE: Perhaps sadly, there's no "perfect optimization." This graphic's intent is to highlight areas that may be worthy of marketers' efforts.

by **Mary D.** of Mary's Donuts

Bot Accessible

There are no impediments to search crawlers reaching this page or determining it's the canonical version.

Built to be Shared

Like/tweet/+1 buttons make it easy for visitors to share on their favorite networks and provide social proof.

Uniquely Valuable

The content offers everything a searcher might want in a unique, high-quality amalgamation.

Phenomenal UX

Clear layout, solid visuals, & beautiful, simple design make the page easy to use & enjoy.

Keyword Targeted

Primary and secondary keyword phrases appear in prominent positions in the headline, title, & content.

Multi-Device Ready

Thanks to solidly-tested, reponsive design, this page loads looking great on any device, screen size, and browser.

Meta Data Inclusive

The page includes authorship, an enticing meta description, and schema markup for recipes, too.

Created by Rand Fishkin

MOZ

Please remember to save this post for future reference!

And don't forget to share it :-)

This epic guide was brought to you by Jason Chesters
http://doseoyourself.com

Twitter