

## Introduction

Our guides are for small businesses and aim to provide helpful information surrounding key areas of marketing communications that allow you to make better decisions for your business.

In the first of our internet marketing guides we look into Search Engine Optimisation or more commonly abbreviated as SEO.



## Some SEO Facts

75% of online sales originate from an organic search

Google is an advertising company that generated some \$50.2 Billion in advertising revenue in 2012

The most effective SEO campaigns do not derive from having the best domain, or using the most keywords. They come from a combination of:

**Developing great content**

**Using effective distribution channels**

**Creating trust around your brand and positioning your company as experts in your field**

**Delivering useful, relevant messages to your visitors and online community**

Companies that regularly use a blog have 434% more indexed pages and therefore generate more leads.

## What is SEO

Your website is a marketing tool. Like any advert or brochure if you choose to have a website, you need to do something with it. Would you have a brochure designed, printed, and then just keep them in a cupboard in the corner of your office?

SEO (Search engine optimization) is the process of fine tuning a website or web-page with the aim of improving its position in a search engine's organic (unpaid) listings.

## Why is SEO important

SEO is specific to organic searches. This is important because 70% of searchers use organic results as opposed to paid listings (PPC).

It is therefore regarded by many businesses as the most important method to drive business online. Consideration needs to be paid to the keywords, competitors, on-page and off-page SEO techniques.

## On-Page Optimisation

This is the challenge of making your website and its content:

- |  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| ▶ Accessible to search engines                   | ▶ Useful and easy to find       |
| ▶ Relevant to your business, products & services | ▶ Compliant with search engines |

## Off-Page Optimisation

This is the process of building your websites exposure across the internet through building links via natural content that engages potential customers and provides easy links back to key pages on your website.

## How search engines work

The role of the search engine is to crawl websites/pages and build an index (or database) of those sites and pages.

Through a complex and ever changing series of calculations, they then return a list of answers relevant to a search query.

The screen print opposite illustrates a search engine results page (SERP) with **Paid Adverts** at the top and highlighted with the “Apricot” coloured background, followed by the **Organic Listing**.

The screenshot shows a search engine results page for 'timber supplies norfolk'. It is divided into two sections: 'Paid Results' and 'Organic Listing'. The 'Paid Results' section is highlighted with a light orange background and includes three ads: 'Sutton's Timber Merchants - Huge bulk discounts. Expert advice', 'Buy Timber - Extensive range of Timber - wickes.co.uk', and 'Stoke Ferry Timber: Timber Merchants | Decking | Roofing'. The 'Organic Listing' section is highlighted with a light blue background and includes three organic search results: 'Ellis Timber Ltd', 'Decking & Timber, East Anglia, Norfolk, Kings Lynn', and 'feettimbersupplies.co.uk/'.

## The structure of a web page

Every web page has a basic structure that search engines look for. Each element of the structure can be optimised to enhance the performance of a page.

**Domain** - your domain is one of the key sources search engines consider. Not just the content of your domain but also the age.

**Title** - the <Title> meta tag is a key part of your on-page optimisation. Not only do search engines consider the content of this, it is also seen by searchers in the results page.

**Description** - like the title, the <Description> meta tag is also vital in the optimisation of your page. It too, can be seen in the search engine results page. Both the title and descriptions should contain your targeted keywords/phrases and should be reflected in the content (paragraph text) of your website.

**Keywords** - the <Keywords> meta tag is not used by search engines. We recommend that you use it to list the keywords you intend to use for that page so you keep a record of what you're targeting.

**Page titles** - the <H1> tag should be used for your main page title and contain some of your keywords.

**Sub-titles** - in order maintain a well-structured page, sub-titles, quotes and call-to-action points should be created using the <H1, H2, H3, H4, etc.> tags.

**Content** - the content and body of your page will be encapsulated in the <p> tag. Other code used in optimising your includes an internal linking structure using the <a> tag and using image <alt> tags.

The screenshot shows the header of a website for 'Lighthouse Design & Marketing'. The main heading is 'Website designers, Graph' in blue. Below it is the URL 'www.lighthousedm.co.uk/' in green. The tagline is 'Welcome to Lighthouse Design & design and marketing consultanc' in black.

<h1>King's Lynn Pet Care Centre  
<h2>Finest Pet Centre in Norfolk  
<p>Whether you're an owner of a dog or cat, King's Lynn Pet Centre delivers friendly, <a>affordable pet care...

Don't just take it from us...  
...read what Google has to say too

Google has some extremely useful, accurate information that we recommend you take few minutes to read. We find this information helps to dispel some myths surrounding SEO and some of the over-whelming “technical” information and jargon you may come across either online or through SEO agencies....click the titles below.

**The Google SEO Quick Guide**

**The Google-friendly Site Guide**

**The Google Webmaster Guidelines**

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