Top 21 SEO Tips and Tricks to Follow

Google says on the record, "Don't write for Search Engines, Write for your readers/audience/users." While this may sound ridiculous, there are plenty of reasons to follow the advice. More often, newbie falls in the trap and often gets confused where to start from. Don't sound to be too harsh, but do not always listen to almighty Google.

We (web entrepreneurs) are mere small creatures and we must write for our readers/users while keeping search engine behavior at the corner of our brain! Producing great content that reader's love is something not everyone's cup of team. So how would you start your venture in 2013? What are the best SEO practices that you should follow? Without further ado, let me present you top 20 SEO Tips for 2013.

Excellent SEO Tips To Follow in 2013

I have used an adjective here – Special. These tips are special not because they are something that you have never heard of, but they are special as you have not understood these basic ones quite effectively!

Keyword Analysis inclusive of Competition Analysis

1. Determine Strategy for Keywords

This must be your first and foremost step. You should be clear with your goals that what keywords you want to play around with. This depends on what you want to gain by your online presence and venture. The question in the previous sentence can be answered with information regarding your target audience.

It may look like a flow chart or catch 22 for you, don't worry, you are right and it is so. We have solutions for it. You can use certain keyword tools like www.keywordspy.com, www.spyfu.com, www.ispionage.com and www.compete.com. In order to get complete market scenario you must look at your competitor's website. You can enter that website's URL to any of the mentioned tools and get an estimation of competition.

2. List The Potential Keywords

You have now, different results from different tools as all of them use different methodology. You can collaborate all the results depending on your common analytical sense and list out 50-100 potential keywords. Create an MS Excel sheet for these Keywords.

3. Check Competition of Keywords

Keyword competition is something most newbies/expert ignores. While sorting out bunch of keywords from Google adword keywords tool is the first step to follow, people often forget that the checking Keyword competition is equally important. There are plenty of tools available out there, but we recommend to try out tools like Traffictravis first.

Later, you can go for the premium tools like SEOMoz keyword difficulty and SERPIQ keyword competition analysis tool. Both the tools delivers the great result and cut down considerable work required in doing competition analysis as well as keyword competition analysis.

On Page SEO Tips

4. HTML

Use a content management service such as WordPress, Blogger, CushyCMS or Drupal and optimize your HTML tags with the keywords. Make sure you also maintain text to HTML ratio. Always try to keep the ratio high so that Google can understand your content better.

5. Title

Keep the character count under 70 and preferably under 66. Use various plugins available for various content management platforms for SEO.

6. Meta Tags & Description

Your keyword must be there in your Meta tag and description. Your meta description must be in the vicinity of 157 characters. This is most important as Search Engines read meta description for understanding the post content.

7. URL and/or Permalinks

Your page URL must contain your key word or keyword phrase. If it is a phrase, words must be separated by hyphens. Use some plugins to remove stop words from the URL/permalinks. It's always good to minimize the use of STOP word in the permalink

8. First Paragraph

While this is not necessary a big factor in ranking, try to include important keyword in first paragraph, so Google can clearly understand what the topic is about. While there is no hard and fast rule, make sure you include primary keyword within first few words of the article.

9. Content Length

As per Guidelines provide by Google, the length of your content must be more than 300 words. We advise you to write content with word count above 500 words. (It will help to protect you from "Animal Hit"). However, we recommend to go over 600-700 mark whenever possible. Instead of writing a simple post without proper information, you should focus your energy to provide quality content with necessary bullet point and images to back-up what you say.

10. Content Quality

Your content must be unique. Thinly copied contents are also getting Panda Hit nowadays so stay away from copy and plagiarism. Make sure you follow proper internal linking strategy without over optimizing anchor text.

11. Keyword Density

Keyword density must be between 2-4%. It means your keyword must not be repeated more than twice or thrice in each 100 words block so if your are writing a 500 words post your keyword count must not exceed 10-15 repetitions. If it does, then Google will count it as over optimization.

12. Image Optimization

Optimize Image ALT tag with your keyword. It is always a good idea to save the image name with the keyword and upload them on the server with the same name. Also attach necessary ALT tag to the image, so Google can understand what the image depicts. Remember, Google is blind, and you need to supply information to Google to understand the image. Moreover, try to provide a wrap up text to explain what the image is all about. This will increase the relevancy as well.

Sitemap

13. Sitemap Submission

Submit your site to the major search engines. Create an XML site map and make sure the search engines can find your site map. Use Google's webmaster's tools to verify your sitemap is being read correctly: http://www.google.com/webmasters/

14. HTML Sitemap

Creating an HTML sitemap is an essential part of your SEO endeavors. This confirms you that search engine crawlers are crawling the site properly.

Back-End

15. Avoid DHTML and Excessive HTML

Search Engines can't read DHTML menus quite easily, so avoid them in your menu. Also, try to maintain HTML to text ratio. Having too many HTML makes the ratio high which is often undesired. Make sure you provided meaningful insight in each and every paragraph and/or article by providing more text.

16. Avoid Major Content in PDF or Flash

Publish your content in HTML format instead of Adobe PDF and Flash. Valuable content that is locked in these formats cannot be easily crawled and indexed.

17. Robots.txt

Make sure your robots.txt file is configured correctly to include and exclude the appropriate directories and files on your website. This file instructs search engines that which portion of your site is not accessible to search engines. Often people misunderstands this concepts which results in duplicate content or the description is unavailable due to robots.txt configuration.

Off Page Optimization

18. Use Social Media Effectively

Market your content on various social networks and media. Try various titles and descriptions that can engage users with your online venture. Initially, target twitter, Facebook, Google+, Stumble Upon, LinkedIn and Reddit. Google is now giving more importance to social media signals to rank website. Now is the time to utilize social media platform and turn the tale in your favor.

19. Generate Quality Backlinks

There are various techniques to generate backlinks. Guest post on other high authority site from same niche, Commenting on the posts related to your site content, Forum Posting and many more techniques are there which should be used moderetly to gain more trust. Well, backlink is itself a big chapter and can cover tons of pages, but we do not want to go that route for the moment.

Please note that Google introduced an update called Penguin to penalize the overly optimized sites, which means that those sites which are having spam backlinks and using black hat backlink techniques. I will explain you in detail how it will identify the spammers, see if there is a site on Diabetes (Health Niche) and the site site owner purchased a bulk of backlinks for the anchor text "***diabetes symptoms in children***" to rank for that keyword.

This can get a red flag and can get penalty because if that is a genuine quality site/article then there should be lot of variations in the anchor test linking to that particular page, because it is a common sense that not everybody in the world will link to the exact anchor text right ? ... Yes, that is not at all possible 😃 because they may link to that via various anchor texts like

   diabetes signs and symptoms in children

diabetes in children

children and diabetes : signs and symptoms

what are the symptoms in children with type 2 diabetes

type 1 diabetes symptoms in children and adults

People (SEOs) even identified alternatives for this as well to spam Google which I am not interested in discussing publicly and if you are interested in knowing them then you can contact me 😃

Also see : Also see : **Google Penguin Recovery Tips and Tricks**

Analysis

20. Use Google Analytics

Install Google Analytics on your website.(http://www.google.com/analytics/)If you've already done this, use the data from: Traffic Sources > Keywords to find additional keywords you may want to optimize.

21. Keyword tracking

Tracking your major campaign and keywords in the Google will give you a clear information about your efforts. It's therefore very necessary to keep track of all your keyword ranking. For this purpose, you can use free and paid tools available online. Even, you can manually track the keyword in the Google. We recommend to use "***whatsmyserp.com***" or similar service to check your keyword ranking.

Hopefully, the above SEO tips will help you to start your venture in 2013. Make sure you follow each and every one of them closely.